

# **Ways of seeing: Conflicting rationalities in contested urban space**

## **The N2 Gateway in the context of Langa**

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# ABSTRACT

In 2005 the South African Department of Housing announced the launch of the N2 Gateway – a housing ‘megaproject’ to pilot the *Breaking New Ground* (BNG) housing plan in Joe Slovo informal settlement in Langa, the oldest African township in Cape Town. This historically contextualised retroductive case study asks what can be learnt from the paradigmatic N2 Gateway to propose to planning theory why such projects, planned with the aim of improving the quality of life of poor and marginal urban residents of the post-apartheid city, so often fail to realise their planned improvements and result in conflict and unintended consequences. A conceptual framework provides the theoretical basis for examining how planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway exposes the underlying rationalities shaping relations amongst and between organs of state and key non-state development actors. Although the BNG policy made provision for *in situ* upgrading of informal settlements, in practice the state declared war on shacks and through the N2 Gateway set out to eradicate Joe Slovo and replace it with a mix of social and subsidy housing. The case provides the basis for analysis of the clash of rationalities amongst state actors who, together with their intermediaries, sought to exercise their ‘wills to govern and improve’ on the basis of simplifications of perceived problems and their solutions. These were countered by competing ‘wills to survive and thrive’ amongst groupings of Langa residents, which in Joe Slovo were closely bound to the logics of informality.

Methodologically the study draws on research methods which embrace the ‘visual turn’, utilising satellite images and photographic compilations as narrative triggers for storytelling by residents, officials and civil society actors. The study draws on more than sixty image-led interview narratives which surface the multiple

dimensions of the case, including complex interconnections between rural and urban spaces which shape social and spatial geographies of life in Langa. These expose multifaceted struggles within and between 'molar structures' of the state in the implementation of the megaproject, highlighting the switch points and reversals of power in state encounters with the micropolitics of local claims on space, place and belonging. The narratives reveal how diverse and concurrent resistance pathways including 'quiet encroachment', street protests, 'elite capture' and legal proceedings which went to the Constitutional Court disrupted, diverted and redirected the state's schemes of improvement. The findings examine how the discourses and practices of the aspirant South African 'developmental state' show little understanding of or regard for the deep-rooted contestations and social differentiation within Langa between 'Cape borners' and generations of rural migrants known as *amagoduka* or 'those who return home'. The conflicting rationalities and deep differences amongst and between state agents and within the broad cast of social actors in Langa extend far beyond the simple binary of state and 'community'. The narratives highlight the fragmented and opaque nature of the state and the bifurcated Langa socialities stratified by the micropolitics of territory, differentiation and belonging. The case study speaks back to planning theory in order to provide important cautions against homogenisation and simplification at the intersection between the apparatus of biopolitics and governmentality and the strategies of struggle of groupings of the poor and not so poor to survive and thrive. It foregrounds a contingent yet historically embedded politics of encounter which eschews homogenising notions of community and a rules-governed communicative rationality in favour of more situated sense-making through agonistic conceptions of planning and development rooted in 'the geography of what happens'.



# ACRONYMS

AEC	Anti-Eviction Campaign
ANC	African National Congress
BNG	Breaking New Ground
CCT	City of Cape Town
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COHRE	Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions
CORC	Community Organisation Resource Centre
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DA	Democratic Alliance
DAG	Development Action Group
DIMP	Disaster Mitigation Programme for Sustainable Livelihoods
FEDUP	Federation of the Urban Poor
FNB	First National Bank
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
HDA	Housing Development Agency
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
ISN	Informal Settlements Network
JPSC	Joint Project Steering Committee
LED	Local Economic Development
LRC	Legal Resources Centre

M3	The initial top level N2 Gateway management structure comprising the Minister of Housing, the Provincial MEC and the Mayor of the City of Cape Town
MEC	Member of the Executive Council
MK	Umkhonto we Sizwe
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
NEC	Native Economic Commission
NGO	Non-government organisation
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress of Azania
PCAS	Policy Co-ordination and Advisory Services
PGWC	Provincial Government of the Western Cape
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PMG	Parliamentary Monitoring Group
PPM	Poor People's Movement
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
QDA	Qualitative Data Analysis
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SANCO	The South African National Civic Organisation
SAPA	South African Press Association
SA SDI	South African Shack Dwellers International
SDI	Shack Dwellers International

SHF	Social Housing Foundation
TRA	Temporary Relocation Area
UDF	United Democratic Front
UISP	Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme
UPRU	Urban Problems Research Unit

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thirty five years' experience as a practitioner and researcher working in informal settlements, hostels and rural areas in southern Africa form the foundation of this thesis. Over this period there have been many people who influenced the way in which I have come to see the world and to whom I am enormously indebted. In the troubled mid-1970s my connections with Aninka Claassens and Reverend David Russell contributed to setting me on a path quite different from that which I had originally imagined. My route has taken me via the informal settlement of Modderdam Rd to the rural village of Sunduza in Herschel District which I had first visited as part of a student project to construct a rural clinic. I lived here with the Siyatsha family for four years, while working as a fieldworker employed by the Environmental and Development Agency, a rural NGO. This was a luminous period in my life which provided me with lasting insights into the precarious lives of rural people and the complex social ties and invisible threads which sustain them. These insights were not yet academic or theoretically framed — they were lived and visceral.

Mthethonzima Siyatsha, the owner of the modest homestead where I stayed was a lean and taciturn man in his early forties. He worked in a factory making asbestos cement roof sheeting and lived in the Everite hostel in Brackenfell, Cape Town. He returned home once a year for three weeks at Christmas. Towards the end of January 1979 he returned to work as usual. A few months later word got back to the village that he had fallen ill. On the 12<sup>th</sup> June he arrived home unannounced. I recorded his homecoming in the diary I kept at the time:

*Mthethonzima 'returned' today — having become an old man whom I did not recognise at the bus halt, carried to the van; an invalid home with TB, empty*

*wicker basket, two blankets, no laces in his shoes. The silence of the sick man:  
his children backed against the stone wall of the hut unspeaking, shocked at the  
break in routine, at the sight of their shuffling father supported in the arms of  
other men; lowered down to the mattress on the floor by the open-hearth fire  
hastily kindled by neighbours.*

By 9:30 the following morning Mthethonzima had died. His widow Nothobela was six months pregnant and was left with four children to raise in an era without any form of state social protection.

Over the years my work confirmed the systemic nature of the Siyatsha family story, variations of which stubbornly persist in the post-apartheid era. But it was an older man named Jokkie Stuurman who lived in Sunduza who helped me to place what happened to Mthethonzima and his family into its broader context. He was a custodian of the oral history of the village and a narrator of the changing experience of migrant labour. As we worked together, he told me of the struggle to resist ‘betterment planning’ — so emblematic of the politics and practices of the state — which I see as the forerunner of the contemporary ‘will to govern and improve’ and its encounters with the ‘will to survive and thrive’ among groupings of the poor that is explored in this study. Jokkie explained how the social conflicts and betrayals from the time of betterment had been implanted like a tumour in the social life of the village which would trouble it for years to come. He charted the collapse of agricultural livelihoods and the workings of the processes which today we understand as ‘deagrarianisation’ which made migration a necessity.

Jokkie had a unique way of being and seeing in the world – a thoughtful man, not prone to generalisation or simplification – a custodian of a vanishing past. He was a mentor who made me aware of the many renderings of history and the need to look at things very carefully from different angles. I continue to engage him in mental conversation when I confront complexity and uncertainty today.

There are many other important people who shape my present. My Phuhlisani partners and friends David Mayson, Boyce Williams, Ursula Smith and Salwah Carelse have been incredibly supportive of me in this endeavour. David generously took over my work at times, despite being overloaded with his own. Your patience and understanding are deeply appreciated.

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Carin Favis and Jeanette Isaacman provided meticulous English transcription, while Nomnikelo Komanisi provided Xhosa transcription and translation. Pule Moloke played an invaluable role reviewing dual-language transcripts, correcting oversights in translation and filling important gaps in content and meaning.

Karen Press has read through the complete text with a sharp copy editing eye which she combined with a finely tuned ear for language, mixed metaphor and academic pretension, backed up by an understanding of the content. Any errors which may have slipped into the text will be due to my last minute adjustments.

An ensemble of long-standing trusted friends have provided moral and practical support as well as stimulating conversations: these include Ben Cousins, Terri Barnes, James Kilgore, Judy Norton, Michael Haddad, Rosie Campbell, Jeanette

Isaacman, Karyn Levy, Merunisa Mohamed, Amy Manchershaw, Aron Mazel, David Muggleston, Peter Speyer, Pauline Stanford and Ed Wethli.

I draw inspiration from John Berger, a writer whom I have never met. His books in collaboration with photographer Jean Mohr — *A Seventh Man* (1977) and *Another Way of Telling* (1992) — together with his trilogy entitled *Into their Labours* (1992) are carefully crafted texts of insight and significance. In these works Berger, a master story teller, chronicles labour migration, rural decline and the shadow side of urbanisation in Europe. He has managed to combine the visual and the documentary with the poetic and the political in accounts that were decades ahead of the social imagination of the time. I have read these books again and again over the years. Their characters effortlessly cross the boundaries between the global north and south, contributing fresh ways of seeing required to apprehend and render the meaning of the forces which beset the migrant poor and socially marginal.

The most important people in need of acknowledgement may appear last in this listing but they are first in my heart. My wife Laura Czerniewicz and my sons Jacques and Francis have supported and encouraged me every step of the way. My sons have put up with my preoccupations with good humour, even though this has meant that there were times when I was absent when I should have been present. As chance would have it I first met Laura in Herschel on a building camp where this story began. She became my companion on a shared journey which has extended for over 30 years. Laura knows me like no other and has fully understood the importance of this process of reflection, research and writing. She has seen me through the highs and lows of the PhD process, providing sound advice, some of which I was foolish enough to ignore and provided reassurance in periods of doubt, doing so many things that made it possible for me to complete this study. I could not ask for a more supportive, loving and understanding partner and sons in life.

Ultimately my thanks go to all those who shared their stories – people in Joe Slovo and Langa, government officials and those in civil society who spoke with candour to lay the rich narrative foundation from which I was able to build an analysis of the case.

Experiencing the pleasure and pride of witnessing my elder son graduate in 2013 brought home to me how my own parents were denied this satisfaction when I chose not to attend my own graduation ceremony in 1976. Accordingly this thesis is dedicated to the memory of my mother and father — Elizabeth and Aymar de Satgé.

7<sup>th</sup> August 2014

Cape Town.



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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Motivation for the research

Ten years ago then President Mbeki signalled a change of approach in South African housing policy in his State of the Nation address to Parliament in May 2004. This new vision for housing was subsequently unveiled as *Breaking New Ground: A Comprehensive Plan for Housing Delivery* (Department of Housing, 2004a). This plan sought to reverse the location of housing projects delivered in terms of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)<sup>1</sup> during the first ten years of South African democracy. The first wave of state-subsidised housing had been delivered primarily through ‘greenfields’ development on the urban periphery and had been criticised for “reinforcing apartheid spatial patterns” (Department of Housing, 2004a: 8). Breaking New Ground (BNG) sought to identify well-located land on which to provide affordable and higher-density rental housing stock for the poor, while simultaneously enabling *in situ* upgrades of informal settlements. However BNG contained a contradiction. While the plan announced “a new informal settlement upgrading instrument” its stated purpose was “to support the focused *eradication* of informal settlements” (Department of Housing, 2004a: 6, emphasis added).

In 2005 the N2 Gateway – a high-profile housing megaproject – was launched in Cape Town to pilot BNG and address the housing and development needs of 11 informal settlements adjacent to the N2 highway, together with those of an

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<sup>1</sup> The RDP was the socio-economic framework of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1994, developed through a consultative process which formed the basis of the legislative programme of the ANC government in the period immediately after the transition to democracy.

estimated 6650 households living in backyard shacks in the vicinity. Cape Town's oldest township, Langa, was selected as the launch site for the N2 Gateway. The project focus in Langa was on the informal settlement of Joe Slovo which had sprung up in the early 1990s along the N2; initially accommodating outflows from overcrowded hostels originally designed for single migrant workers but now increasingly home to families, as well as to people moving out of cramped backyard shacks in Langa. The freestanding informal settlement was the most visible expression of a broader upwelling of informality which had started to fill in and blur the spatial grid across most township precincts. These local outflows were swelled by rapid in-migration of work seekers from former 'homeland' areas in the Eastern Cape. The settlement grew rapidly and developed a reputation as the locus of increasingly frequent and devastating shack fires, linked to its youthful demographic and the predominance of young single men.

The N2 Gateway set out to 'eradicate' Joe Slovo and replace it with a mix of affordable rental and ownership housing units. However the megaproject was shadowed by intense controversy from the outset and has provoked multifaceted and long-running conflicts. The intrusion of the N2 Gateway into the complex social mosaic of Langa served to escalate rival claims on space, place, identity and belonging between Langa 'borners'<sup>2</sup>, backyarders, hostel dwellers and informal settlers. In its early years the project provoked militant resistance, protest and civil disobedience, triggering state moves to evict residents of the informal settlement and opposing court actions that resulted in a Constitutional Court judgment which reshaped the future of the project (Constitutional Court of South Africa, 2011).

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<sup>2</sup> Langa 'borners' are those who were born and grew up in the city and had been granted urban residence rights in the pre-democratic era. They are associated with a particular '*kasi*' or township set of values and attitudes which differentiate them from 'unsophisticated rural migrants'. The emergence of this term and its social implications is discussed extensively in Chapter 3.

This research seeks to identify and theorise the causes of the frequent failure and the prevalence of unintended consequences in megaprojects initiated with the stated aim of improving the lives of their poor 'beneficiaries'.

## **1.2. Development of the research topic and method**

Joe Slovo was selected as the flagship of the new vision for housing and informal settlement upgrading. This, together with the many layers of contestation which have continued to unfold around it, highlights the paradigmatic nature of the case and its potential to "highlight more general characteristics of the society in question...with metaphorical and prototypical value" (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 397).

The Housing Development Agency<sup>3</sup> (HDA) which is currently tasked with project management has characterised the project as follows:

*The N2 Gateway is a national government-led priority project involving the building of fully subsidised, rental and affordable bonded homes to create sustainable communities in designated precincts along the N2 highway. It is the most ambitious low cost mega housing development in South Africa. It is a pilot project intended to address historic and endemic problems associated with rapid urbanisation, poverty and homelessness by providing 120 000 people with 23 000 homes.*

(HDA, 2014: n.p.)

HDA acknowledged "years of challenges involving policy, stakeholder relationships, project management, negative racial perceptions, invasions, court actions, community protests, and allegations of corruption" (ibid.: n.p.) prior to its takeover of the N2 Gateway in June 2009. The history of contestation around the

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<sup>3</sup> The HDA is a public entity established by the Housing Development Agency Act (No. 23 of 2008).

See [http://www.thehda.co.za/uploads/images/HDA\\_Act\\_booklet\\_2012\\_1.pdf](http://www.thehda.co.za/uploads/images/HDA_Act_booklet_2012_1.pdf)



megaproject and its pilot status makes it well suited to a retroductive case research process. As Duminy, drawing on Lauria and Wagner (2006) has noted:

*Retroductive research strategies typically progress from a theoretical framework (which can take the form of a hypothesized framework or model, or a set of related hypotheses), to an empirical case, and then reach back to address the original theoretical idea, framework or approach.*

(Duminy, in press)

The different phases of the enquiry profiled below help to shape and refine the topic and distil key research questions.

### **1.3. Clarification of the research problem and core questions**

The core research problem is the frequent failure of urban development megaprojects whose aim is to reshape the distortions associated with the ‘apartheid city’ (Christopher, 1983; Swilling et al., 1991; Maylam, 1995). Exploratory research helped to assess and confirm the paradigmatic nature of the N2 Gateway case and crystallised the central research question:

- What can be learnt from the N2 Gateway to propose to planning theory and development practice why megaprojects planned with the aim of improving the quality of life of poor and marginal urban residents of the post-apartheid city so often fail to realise their planned improvements and result in unintended consequences?

### **1.4. Development of framing theory**

The central research problem has directed the theoretical trajectory of this study. This hinges on theorising relations of power and rationality reflecting diverse ways of seeing which frame the encounters within and between the state, its agents and

the groupings of the poor living in conditions of informality in the post-apartheid city. Theorists and thinkers within the post-structural canon (Giorgio Agamben, Stuart Corbridge, Michel de Certeau, James Ferguson, Bent Flyvbjerg, Michel Foucault, Tania Murray Li, James C. Scott, and Vanessa Watson) have been drawn on to elaborate overall framing theory. Analysis of the research problem also draws on the extensive literature chronicling the apartheid and post-apartheid city (Patrick Bond, Marie Huchzermeyer, Philip Harrison, Paul Maylam, Sarah Nuttall, Susan Parnell, Edgar Pieterse, Jennifer Robinson, Mark Swilling, Maliq Simone, Alison Todes and Vanessa Watson)<sup>4</sup> to help illuminate contestations over space, place and belonging and related strategies of struggle.

## **1.5. Design of a conceptual framework**

Engagement with theory on power and rationality and the literature on the South African city provides the foundation for the development of a conceptual framework underpinning the research enquiry. The conceptual framework draws on Foucauldian conceptions of power, the state apparatus of governmentality and biopolitics drawn together in what Li has conceptualised as “the will to govern and improve” and its encounter with “the will to survive and thrive” (Li, 2007b: 5) of groupings of the poor expressed through complex micropolitics, claims on space and place and dynamic and adaptive strategies of struggle<sup>5</sup>. The framework explores the

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<sup>4</sup> These researchers are pointers to a broad corpus of scholarship in this area.

<sup>5</sup> Li’s conception of the “will to govern and improve” and the “will to survive and thrive” cited here become key elements in the conceptual framework shaping this study. As these concepts appear frequently in the text they will be enclosed in single quotes which denote attribution to Li but which make for easier reading. The same applies for Watson’s conception of “conflicting rationalities” and “deep difference”.

“conflicting rationalities” (Watson, 2003) that this engenders and illuminates the switch points and reversals in the flows of power which result.

## **1.6. Paradigmatic case selection, associated research questions**

Exploratory studies confirmed the paradigmatic nature of the case and highlighted diverse historical and anthropological perspectives which made it clear that the value of the case would be amplified by situating it firmly within the context and history of Langa and would boost its potential to reflect on and write back to planning theory. Initial studies also helped to access a network of informants and reveal a rich cache of published and unpublished documentation which, together with extensive interviews, could provide the lattice for triangulation.

The informal settlement adds to an already complex and crowded space shaped by historically layered social and spatial geographies of Langa, which are grounded in the spread of public and private hostels in the form of the barracks, special quarters, flats and the ‘Zones’ constructed to house generations of migrant workers, together with the development of semi-detached and freestanding family units constructed for urbanised households across different eras.

Over the years the changing balance of political forces provided increasing room for manoeuvre so that informality progressively began to physically redraw the township. This commenced with the construction of backyard shacks in the yards of township houses, followed by the erection of shacks in the open spaces of hostel precincts and culminating in the rapid growth of the freestanding informal settlement of Joe Slovo in the early 1990s. This rapid expansion blurred the historical spatial and social grids and accelerated contestation, resulting in a proliferation of conflicting and overlapping claims on space and place.

Post-1994 South Africa's democratically elected government asserted that by "linking democracy, development and a people centred approach we are paving the way for a new democratic order" (ANC, 1994: n.p.). This initially drew on rights-driven narratives of urban renewal which largely glossed over complexities on the ground. As new government departments took shape, so South African policy makers started to articulate a vision of a developmental state. Since the first wave of policy making in the 1990s, South Africa has produced a variety of development plans<sup>6</sup> which, with each iteration have accorded more and more weight to the *techné* of planning and the pre-eminence of expert and bureaucratic actors "where the politicians reign and the state bureaucrats rule" (Gumede, 2011: 11).<sup>7</sup> It is these discourses of the developmental state which spawn megaprojects like the N2 Gateway that appear to offer politicians and planners the seductive promise of addressing historical urban problems at scale.

The core research problem and primary research question introduced above are further explored through closely related subsidiary research questions:

- What are the principal contestations over space, place and belonging in Langa between Langa borners and rural-urban migrants known as *amagoduka*?

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<sup>6</sup> South Africa has seen a succession of development plans. The RDP was quickly overtaken in 1996 by the macroeconomic framework for Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), which had many features in common with classic structural adjustment programmes. The Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa was introduced in 2005, before being eclipsed by the New Growth Path in 2009 which contends with the 2012 National Development Plan.

<sup>7</sup> Since 2007 various government plans have emphasised the need to construct a "developmental state" which "positions the state at the centre of efforts to transform society" and which builds a public service "that can effectively lead the transformation process" (Edigheji, 2010). Gumede cites Johnson (1982) to whom this quote characterising the Japanese developmental state was attributed.

- What are the principal strategies of struggle employed by groupings of the migrant and informal poor to ‘survive and thrive’ and how are these a reflection of their rationality?
- How have the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway in Langa exposed the underlying rationalities shaping relations amongst and between state and non-state actors and impacted on social contestation within Langa?
- How does the case of the N2 Gateway in Langa illuminate and extend the concepts of “conflicting rationalities” and “deep difference” as elaborated by Watson (2003, 2006)?
- How does the complex of contestations surfaced by the N2 Gateway reveal the “permanent provocation”, oscillations and reversals along “the frontier for the relationship of power” (Foucault, 1982) between the expressions of ‘the will to govern and improve’ of the state and its intermediaries and local struggles ‘to survive and thrive’?

A final retroductive question elaborates on the core research question and marks the reflection back to theory:

- How can an analysis of these multiple gazes, competing claims, and divergent and overlapping rationalities contribute to planning theory and practice to enable it to be more cognisant of the rationalities of informality in the post-apartheid city in ways which incorporate “the conflict, ambiguity and indeterminacy characteristic of actual social life” (Holston, 1998: 46)?

## **1.7. Research design and methodology, empirical research**

As noted above the research design employs the case study research method (Gerring, 2007; Flyvbjerg, 2007; Yin, 2009) utilising a retroductive approach. This combines the investigation of social and spatial history with elicitation of contemporary narratives across diverse settings, both within Langa and from state

actors and intermediary organisations in civil society. The research enquiry combines image-led narrative elicitation with the close analysis of secondary texts and grey literature. The impetus towards photo elicitation as a generator of narrative draws on experience of utilising participatory learning and action (PLA) methodologies<sup>8</sup> (Pretty et al., 1995; Chambers, 2007) which privilege the visual. The photo elicitation method developed as the basis for interviews hybridises diverse approaches to the use of images (Collier, 1957; Berger and Mohr, 1967; Collier and Collier, 1986; Harper, 2002; Clark-Ibáñez, 2004; Ethington, 2010; Freund and Thomson, 2011) as a narrative trigger. The overall approach is premised on introducing stimuli for storytelling in order to surface elusive representations of rationality and reveal the practices of power.

The case study design and methodology scrutinises the N2 Gateway through two lenses. The first provides a close-up of the actors, their operations and impacts within the intensely spatialised and socially complex setting of Langa. A second lens zooms out to review the apparatus of governmentality and the interplays of power within and between these actor ensembles.

The research strategy involved two clusters of interviews, both utilising image-led narrative elicitation. Cluster one was based on a mix of random and purposive sampling within Langa. Cluster two sought to purposively sample and interview strategic actors in the state and associated trustees with direct involvement in Joe Slovo, Langa and the N2 Gateway.

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<sup>8</sup> There is a literature on participatory research and appraisal methods which originated with rapid rural appraisal (RRA) followed by participatory rural (and urban) appraisal (PRA) and participatory learning and action (PLA). Variations on these methodologies are also found in Freirian literacy and primary health care practices and in several other disciplines.

Following the interviews a strategy was developed to identify and analyse primary and secondary data sources in order to test and triangulate the trends and issues surfaced by interview data, and examine divergences where these occurred.

## **1.8. Data interpretation and analysis**

The research process generated large volumes of data. All interviews were transcribed verbatim and were captured and coded using a coding scheme developed in NVivo, together with selected primary and secondary source materials. Given the imperative to write back to theory, contradictory evidence and alternative perspectives were actively sought within the data as a means of interrogating the theory and refining the research questions.

Interviews conducted in English and Xhosa surfaced important lacunae in meanings and interpretation and highlighted the many distortions which can arise through linguistic intermediation. These provide for reflections on research methods and planning practice and have important theoretical implications for hypothesising a clash of rationalities and associated ways of seeing.

The conceptual framework provides theoretically enabled ways of seeing to engage with the empirical data to address the foundational research questions. This enables an examination of the ways in which megaprojects such as the N2 Gateway are the expression of high-level political rationalities of the state. It helps to render the varieties of contestation, the ways in which groupings of the poor and not so poor in Langa see each other and the state – and are seen in turn – in order to map complex circuits and interplays of power and chart the day-to-day practices of governmentality and the exercise of biopolitics which shape the contours of these multilateral encounters and reveal the points where these rationalities clash.

The N2 Gateway shows how development interventions rooted in proto-apartheid, grand apartheid and post-apartheid democratic political orders turn out to have

much in common with one another. The state's "will to govern and improve" across different eras repeatedly comes into conflict with the "will to survive and thrive" (Li, 2007b) of those cast as the subjects of state power and whose varied agency and interactions intersect in attempts to co-opt or subvert the power of the plan. In this respect de Certeau (1984: 129) observes that "what the map cuts up the story cuts across", suggesting that projects which are planned within restricted conceptions of time and space often fail to recognise the many ways in which the claims and meanings of the past connect with those of the present. The case reveals how the N2 Gateway was launched on the basis of the most partial understanding of what had gone before. The case study explores how this disconnect is exacerbated by delivery-focused megaproject logic which operates within closed geographic boundaries excised from their surroundings. This limits the ability of the planned development to recognise the significance of history, and to hear or engage with the multiple stories which speak to social relations and cut across the contained project space – a critical deafness which amplifies the potential of failure.

## **1.9. Writing back to theory**

The case highlights the systemic limitations of current approaches to urban housing, informal settlement upgrading and spatial planning which while promising a "transformative developmentalism" (Menguelé et al., 2008) are drawn to megaprojects of symbolic significance which persist in technical and social simplifications that attempt to compress and contain complex realities within neatly bounded project logics. These reveal the pitfalls of technicist planning with its veneer of communication and 'participation', the consequences of state simplification and standardisation, the homogenisation of 'community' and the dangers of a thin analytics of power and constructions of rationality.



The analysis of the N2 Gateway in Langa seeks to contribute to the theorisation of a planning approach which better engages with the rationalities of informality in the post-apartheid city, the continuities and discontinuities in the persistence of rural-urban linkages and patterns of migration. This is alert to Foucauldian readings of power, its distribution, flows and reversals and starts from the premise of conflict, divergent rationalities and “deep difference” (Mouffe, 1999; Sandercock, 2000; Hillier, 2003; Watson, 2003; 2006) .

The analysis of why megaprojects like the N2 Gateway so often fail reveals how the imaginary of the developmental state reprises older lexicons of control and hallucinations of overarching planning authority. The realities of structural poverty do not fit well with the imaginaries of human settlements policy which acknowledge the need for informal settlement upgrading but slip back into discourses and practices of eradication. This enables the formulation of a series of theoretical propositions which draw on the conceptual framework and findings from the empirical research to illuminate the fault lines delineating the clashes of rationality, the interplays and reversals of power. These foreground particular ways of seeing which enlarge and enrich the conception of conflicting rationalities and the ways in which informality and situated claims on space, place and belonging encounter the discourses of the developmental state which consistently interpret the persistence of informality as a marker of state impotence and dysfunctionality.

In this way the case provides the opportunity to reflect on practice, and to assess and enlarge on foundational theory to expand the terrain of “border thinking – for creating ways of seeing and thinking that are both within and outside the dominant representations” (Harrison, 2006: 334).

## **1.10. Document structure**

The thesis is structured into eight chapters:

**Chapter 1** provides an overall motivation for the research topic, and introduces the key research problem and questions before providing an overview of the factors which influenced the selection of the Langa component of the N2 Gateway as a paradigmatic case. It sets out the key theoretical and methodological requirements for the rigorous investigation and analysis of the case using a retroductive case approach.

**Chapter 2** provides a comprehensive review of the theoretical streams which underpin different aspects of the enquiry and draws them together into an overarching conceptual framework which guides the research design and the subsequent analysis of data.

**Chapter 3** discusses the research design and methodology. It redacts the requirements of the case method with regard to the assembly of multiple sources of evidence; it describes the design of “converging lines of enquiry” and explicates “a process of triangulation and corroboration” (Yin, 2009: Loc 2438). It provides an in-depth discussion of the image-led narrative technique utilised for more than 50 of the 67 interviews conducted while researching actor perspectives on different aspects of the case. It examines the elusive qualities of language and that which is ‘lost in translation’ and which shapes the transfers of meaning in a research setting requiring an interlocutor, providing a critical reflection on qualitative research methods in multilingual environments.

**Chapter 4** provides a detailed rendering of the policy and case context which is further supported by appendices. It reviews the origins and the growth of the informal settlement and locates the N2 Gateway within the social and spatial history of Langa. It organises the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway into five episodes and provides insights into the evolution of the often intensely contested relationships between spheres of government, organs of state and parastatal housing and development agencies and traces the history social fault lines within Langa.

**Chapter 5** presents the research data and key research findings. The chapter presents actor voices and narratives to cast light on the contingent and situated nature of rationalities to provide the evidence to address the primary research questions and subsequently to write back to theory. Actor narratives contrast perspectives of diverse groupings within Langa with those located within different spheres and branches of the state and their intermediaries in civil society organisations.

**Chapter 6** discusses and analyses the findings in relation to the five subsidiary research questions to examine the principal contestations over space, place and belonging in Langa. It examines how the diverse strategies of struggle employed by groupings of the poor in their bids to ‘survive and thrive’ influence the nature of their encounters with state actors and apparatus embodying the ‘will(s) to govern and improve’. The chapter explores how the planning and implementation of various phases of the N2 Gateway in Langa served to amplify and foreground previously latent contestations. It excavates the underlying rationalities shaping relations amongst and between actors within Langa and the ways that these articulated with actors representing organs of state and key non-state development actors to reveal the “permanent provocation”, oscillations and reversals along “the frontier for the relationship of power” (Foucault, 1982).

**Chapter 7** addresses the central research question regarding why megaprojects like the N2 Gateway so often fail before presenting a series of theoretical propositions arising from the research. It counterposes the logic of grand plans, their imagined yield of deliverables projected through logical frameworks, and the simplifications and linear grids imposed on space which are central to the *techné* of state rationality, with the insurgent geometries of informality and the multiple narratives illuminating the competing social claims of people to place. It distils key learnings from the case study to influence the trajectory of planning theory and related

practice so as to better incorporate perspectives from the South which enable a fine-grained theoretical framing of conflicting rationalities in contested urban space.

**Chapter 8** concludes by stepping back to critically review the research process and implications for improved future research design. It examines what remains to be learnt and proposes directions for future research.

# Chapter 2

## THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the theoretical underpinnings of different aspects of the investigation before drawing them together into an overarching conceptual framework to structure a retroductive, single case study enquiry and guide the research design and the subsequent analysis of data.

The chapter commences with a discussion of the uneasy place of theory in and from the 'global South'. It provides the rationale for the choice of theory from the post-structural canon before examining the theoretical framing shaping the key research questions. The chapter goes on to presents the key components of the conceptual framework which employs a Foucauldian lens. It examines the discourses and practices of the state and how these are expressed through the 'will(s) to govern and improve' shaping the actions of state agents and associated 'trustees' as they encounter the 'will(s) to survive and thrive' amongst disparate groupings of the poor. These state-poor encounters reveal the evolving biopolitics of the administration of life and the workings of power which are at the heart of governmentality. They highlight the apparatus, institutions and procedures which give effect to state policies and shape its practices on 'the ground'.

The chapter theorises the shifting and indeterminate nature of this 'ground' – a terrain of informality, dynamic rural – urban linkages, featuring dispersed "domestically fluid" and spatially "stretched" households (Spiegel et al., 1996: 9) which are the objects of state 'improvement'. It conceptualises the strategies of struggle of groupings of the poor and the ways in these profile a micropolitics earthed in contesting and historically rooted claims on space, place and belonging.

The chapter examines the circuits of knowledge, rationality and power crisscrossing the axes locating the state and Langa based actors in the N2 Gateway. It explores how these rationalities and narratives conflict, and reveals flows of power, which embody the potential for switches and reversals. The chapter concludes with the visual presentation of a conceptual framework which summarises the relationship between key theoretical components.

## **2.2. Theory in and from the South**

Social theory, with its constant quest to trace the workings of power and the operations of society from era to era, remains an intensely contested domain, largely dominated by the authority of metropolitan theory (Connell, 2007) predominantly based on Western perspectives. Theory from the North must struggle to directly engage with the complex histories and signifiers of social meaning which have shaped the realities of the 'global South' (Burawoy and Von Holdt, 2012). It is left to Southern researchers to adapt, interpret and innovate around this theory. As Comaroff and Comaroff have recently argued:

*Western enlightenment thought has, from the first, posited itself as the wellspring of universal learning, of Science and Philosophy, uppercase; concomitantly, it has regarded the non-West ... primarily as a place of parochial wisdom, of antiquarian traditions, of exotic ways and means... These other worlds, in short, are treated less as sources of refined knowledge than as reservoirs of raw fact.*

(Comaroff and Comaroff, 2012: 1)

Jacklin and Vale (2009) have asked how to "reimagine the social in South Africa" in a post-apartheid era, while simultaneously acknowledging that we continue to inhabit a world where social theory is primarily the product of North American and European scholarship (Schatzki, 2009: 29). Lalu highlights the balancing act implicit

in our theoretical choices in the South, and indicates the need for social theories which are equipped to closely read and navigate the contested realities of the post-colony in the current era and which are not entangled with the promulgation of grand narratives about history and society:

*Ascribing meaning to the post-apartheid demands effective histories and new critical models for understanding apartheid's legacies that do not downplay or uncritically accept the way subjection works through colonialism, apartheid, the largely failed statist narratives of nationalism, the economism of modes of production narratives or blind faith in agency among practitioners of social history.*

(Lalu, 2009: 272)

Schatzki (2009: 38-39) observes how social theory provides frameworks for investigation, enables particular understandings of key concepts such as power, culture and rationality, signposts topics for enquiry and suggests connections between research findings. Along with the choice of theoretical lens we must address the poorly acknowledged politics of language and its implications for the rendering of meaning in empirical research in the South. The dominant language of social theory is English, which remains the acknowledged international language of scholarship (Lillis and Curry, 2010). The encounter between English and African languages in Southern research and development settings remains at best a footnote in most theoretical frameworks and accounts of research practice (Pillay, 2009). This silence around language is bound up with a broader complex of “things unsaid” and the many ways in which ‘race’, relative social position, gender and language capabilities mediate how we see and are seen in different settings. This in turn shapes the conditions of meaning making and knowledge production, “the power relations which saturate it, the claims we make on and for it, and the status we afford it” (ibid.: 261). Retaining constant awareness of the complexity of the “unsaid”

requires deep reflexivity and alertness to the many ways in which this influences ways of seeing that direct the researcher's gaze.

These factors underpin the challenge of locating theory in the South which eschews well-worn grand narratives and totalising theoretical accounts that have long lost traction. Thrift provides an important caution concerning the overly rigid subjugation of the research enquiry to a particular theoretical approach:

*I do not think that it is a function of a social scientist to simply apply the work of philosophers (as in a Deleuzian approach, a Foucauldian approach, an Agambenian approach, and so on). It seems to me to be a highly questionable assumption that modern social science stands in this kind of subordinate relationship to a set of themes from Western philosophy or should see its task as simply echoing the assumptions those themes may make. So far as I am concerned social scientists are there to hear the world and to make sure that it can speak back as much as they are there to produce wild ideas – and then out of this interaction they may be able to produce something that is itself equally new.*

(Thrift, 2008: 18)

The aim here is to enable a theoretical framing of diverse ways of seeing and divergent rationalities reflective of multiple social realities, constructed by groupings of the poor with particular histories in discrete social settings and their encounters with the actors that promote state schemes of improvement.

### **2.2.1 The affordances of post-structural theory**

It is argued here that post-structural theory is best equipped to engage with the complexity surfaced by the N2 Gateway case. It deploys an analytics which “accepts power as unavoidable...where knowledge and truth are contested, and the rationality of planning is exposed as a focus of conflict” (Flyvbjerg and Richardson, 2002: 9). This helps to chart the ebbs and flows of power and resistance which gives



credence to the multiplicity of small stories that legitimate “unofficial knowledges...[previously] disqualified as unrigorous, undisciplined, unprofessional” (Agger, 1991: 126). It assists with deconstructing expert discourses and their tendency to ‘render technical’ (Ferguson, 1994; Li, 2007b), alert to the ways in which expert rationality “is penetrated by power” (Agger, 1991).

Post-structural theory is watchful of masked presuppositions and the ways in which language and the interplay of languages shape reality. It is premised on the exploration of multiple perspectives which “enable ordinary people to speak knowledgeably about the world... empowering a variety of heretofore muted speakers to join discussions about social issues” (Agger, 1991: 121). It embodies the subtlety required to interpret local situational micro-narratives while retaining a critical distance from universal claims of truth.

### **2.2.2 Meta-theoretical starting points**

Flyvbjerg and Richardson (2002) outline a Foucauldian approach to empirical enquiry in which:

- *the researcher is equipped with a language and theoretical analysis of power and its techniques and strategies which guides the researcher through the studies;*
- *research is based on richly contextualised, detailed case studies;*
- *the relations between power and rationality are a central focus;*
- *the focus moves beyond communicative events;*
- *the language is of conflict rather than communication.*

(2002: 20)

This broad approach counters Habermasian theories of communicative action (Habermas, 1984; 1996; 1998) that remain core to much Northern planning theory. It helps to assemble and connect the disparate elements which make up the conceptual

framework which theorises the interplay between actors associated with the state and those in Langa drawn together through the N2 Gateway. The framework locates the operations of the state along one axis which connects biopolitics, “the administration of life particularly as it appears at the level of populations” (Dean, 2010: 118), with the practices of governmentality and its apparatus. These elements are foundational for the “will to govern and improve” (Li, 2007b) expressed through the actions of the state by its agents and intermediaries.

The range of actors associated with the state axis highlights the plurality of wills to govern which raises important questions about the conceptualisation of the state. Li (2005), drawing on Scott (1998), aims to go beyond his proposition of an “‘up there’ all seeing state” (2005: 384) with a focus on the roles of non-state development actors who share the state’s agenda and its ‘will to govern and improve’. Li notes that:

*Rather than emerging fully formed from a single source, many improvement schemes are formed through an assemblage of objectives, knowledges, techniques, and practices of diverse provenance.*

(2005: 386)

The wills to govern and improve advanced by agents of the state encounter a diversity of “will(s) to survive and thrive” (Li, 2007b). These are grounded in the diverse strategies of struggle employed by groupings of the urban and rural poor, many of whom are living in conditions of informality, to advance and secure their claims on space and place to secure a foothold in the city, and in many cases these strategies continue to connect them with the countryside.

Corbridge et al. (2005: 20) note that the state can function both as a presence and an absence, and caution against a “reductionist understanding of State – poor encounters” (ibid.), emphasising the diverse ways in which groupings of the poor see and encounter the state. The conceptual framework makes visible the tension

between horizontal and vertical trajectories of power and knowledge which are rooted in the conflict of rationalities (Watson, 2003), and the tangential encounters of hybrid logics and practices that are frequently reflective of “deep difference” (Watson, 2006; 2007). This conception enables a fine-grained analysis of the dynamics and flows of power which affords a theoretical and practical alertness to the potential for rupture and reversal. It illuminates how the developmental agenda of the state is mediated or countered by the complex of factors shaping the topologies of space and place, and the conflicting social claims upon it and within it, which in turn are “threaded into social practices and woven into relations of power” (Gregory, 1994: 76; Murdoch, 2006).

While the focus of this study is on a bounded locality – the N2 Gateway precinct in Langa – and the analysis focuses primarily on Joe Slovo Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the N2 megaproject, the research process and setting highlight the constant imbrications between past and present, as myriad factors rooted in the confluence of urban and rural histories germinate in an uncertain present. These complexities are played out in the N2 Gateway context through the torrent of voices and narratives, and associated conflicts and interplays of rationality, which at times clash head on, and in other instances overlap or encounter each other obliquely. Such a context requires the bringing of different theoretical and methodological perspectives into conversation with one another while demanding a methodology which can apprehend fugitive meanings:

*A prey to irreducible levels of complexity, reality now seems to be best understood through images, evocations, sensations and illuminations, adopting a storytelling attitude that weakens the age-old distinction between creative prose and analytical prose.*

(Salvemini, 2012: 9)

This conversation is enabled through the use of theoretically situated narratives, an approach discussed further in Chapter 3 which focuses on research methodology.

### **2.3. Framework axes**

Chapter 2 now explores the twin axes of the conceptual framework in more detail. The state axis draws on theoretical perspectives from Foucault with respect to the relational nature of power and understandings of governmentality in an era of biopolitics. These are interpreted by Li who, while deploying Foucauldian analytics of the practices of government, is simultaneously critical of “studies that draw their inspiration from Foucault” which, she argues “tend to be anaemic on the practice of politics” (2007a: 26).

The framework elaborated below draws on the work and theoretical insights of a range of social theorists and those who interpret their *oeuvre* in various knowledge domains (Berger, 1972; Berger and Mohr, 1982; Scott, 1985; Ferguson, 1994; Scott, 1990; Gupta, 1995; Scott, 1998; Bayat, 2000a; Flyvbjerg and Richardson, 2002; Watson, 2002; 2003; Ferguson and Gupta, 2005; Li, 2005; Watson, 2006; Li, 2007a; 2007b; Watson, 2009). These are further grounded in theory and methodology underpinning case study research (Gomm et al., 2000; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Gerring, 2007; Yin, 2009) and its retroductive application.

The framework, together with the research methods discussed in Chapter 3, seeks to facilitate a greater ethnographic “thickness” (Geertz, 2003) which is mindful of Ortner’s critique of studies that focus on power and resistance but which are “ethnographically thin – thin on the internal politics of dominated groups, thin on the cultural richness of those groups, and thin on the subjectivity – the intentions, desires, fears, projects – of the actors engaged in these dramas” (Ortner, 1996: 299).

The sections which follow examine the different theoretical elements making up the state axis, focusing on the multiple expressions of the ‘will to govern and improve’

embedded within the biopolitics and the administration of lives of the population, the workings of power associated with the 'governmentalisation of the state', and the ensemble of institutions and practices comprising the 'apparatus' which gives effect to state policies and the functioning of its institutions.

## **2.4. The state axis**

This section mounts the theoretical scaffolding to enable an interrogation of the operations of the state and identify the forces and factors that shape the actions of agents and trustees in their encounters with groupings of the poor. At the core of these discourses and practices is the 'will to govern and improve' as formulated by Li. However, it is proposed that this is constituted through an ensemble of plural and sometimes conflicting wills to govern and improve within the spheres of the state and its intermediaries.

### **2.4.1 Wills to govern and improve**

Dean proposes that "even at its apparently most bureaucratic and managerial or its most market inspired, government is a fundamentally Utopian activity. It presupposes a better world, society, way of doing things or way of living" (2010: 45). This resonates strongly in the post-apartheid South African setting, where the promise of 'a better life for all'<sup>9</sup> has long been the foundation of political discourse. This promise is at the centre of the constitutional order and permeates the objectives of policy and planning. Ostensibly the quest for a better life has been advanced as the motivation to construct a 'developmental state' which seeks to better align and co-ordinate the activities of the three spheres of government – national, provincial and local/metropolitan. This discourse includes the notion of 'partnership', wherein

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<sup>9</sup> This was the slogan of the African National Congress (ANC) when it went to the polls in 1994 and has found its way into subsequent policy discourse.

the state is presumed to act in concert with a wide array of non-state development actors, and is reflective of the multiple wills to improve.

Li characterises these non-state partners as 'trustees', observing that the 'will to improve' is not just a concern of government:

*Many parties share in the will to improve. They occupy the position of trustees, a position defined by the claim to know how others should live, to know what is best for them, to know what they need.*

(Li, 2007b: 4)

In the South African context these 'trustees' include NGOs and civil society organisations, which are conventionally positioned as intermediaries in the space between the state and 'the people'. Bayat observes that civil society intermediaries such as NGOs are "susceptible to clientelism" (Bayat, 2000b: 11). There are also strong arguments that commercial contractors and professional 'service providers', with their technical, social and development facilitation functions, should also be located along this continuum. Li proposes that the boundary which "clearly separates those who need to be developed from those who will do the developing" (2007b: 14–15) ultimately aligns civil society organisations with the state. She asserts that "the claim to expertise in optimising the lives of others is a claim to power," while the "will to improve is situated in the field of power Foucault termed 'government' which he defines as the 'conduct of conduct' – the attempt to "shape human conduct by calculated means" (ibid.: 5).

Li "draws attention to the inevitable gap between what is attempted and what is accomplished" (ibid.: 1). She examines how the development programmes presumed to enable the realisation of this better world and life inevitably ignite local struggle, as "a central feature of programming is the requirement to frame problems in terms amenable to technical solution". She proposes an analytic approach which draws on

the disciplinary perspectives of anthropology that seek to “make improvement strange”, in order to “better explore its peculiarities and its effects” (2007b: 2).

Li identifies two closely linked practices which are central to the operation of bureaucratic and expert power, ‘problematization’ and ‘rendering technical’, which give the ‘will to improve’ its specific programmatic and operational forms. She draws on Ferguson (1994) to examine the processes through which technical experts “repose political questions in technical terms” identifying the capacity to ‘render technical’ that “constitutes the boundary between those who are positioned as trustees...and those subject to expert direction” (Li, 2007b: 7). But she goes further to draw particular attention to the “conditions under which expert discourse is punctured by a challenge that it cannot contain; moments when the targets of expert schemes reveal, in word or deed, their own critical analysis of the problems that confront them” (ibid.: 11). As the case study below will show, such moments of rupture mark key turning points in both the history of Langa and the implementation of the N2 Gateway megaproject.

Li distinguishes between what she terms the “practice of government” and the “practice of politics which represents the expression, in word or deed of a critical challenge”:

*Challenge often starts out as refusal of the way things are. It opens up a front of struggle. This front may or may not be closed as newly identified problems are rendered technical and calculations applied. Government, from this perspective is a response to the practice of politics that shapes, provokes and challenges it”.*

(ibid.: 11)

The distinction between the practice of government and the practices of politics is central to an understanding of the N2 Gateway, as the case study will demonstrate. It will also illustrate how the boundaries determining the reach of expert and

bureaucratic rationality and its disciplinary hold on the poor are constantly being redrawn by the ceaseless manoeuvres of state and non-state actors within and across their respective domains.

Li is careful to avoid a reductionist perspective on the exercise of the will to improve. She cautions against restricting analysis of the actions of the “trustees” to a search for “hidden motives of profit and domination”, as this simplification would obscure much of “what actually happens in the name of improvement”. She presents a multifaceted reading of the will to govern which is directed to what Foucault (1979: 13) terms “a whole series of specific finalities”. Li observes that the elements within this ensemble of finalities seldom sit easily with one another and that one finality may contradict another. This recognises the ubiquity of contestation and the possibility that diverse trustees bring different orientations to their respective scripts, and that analysis of these different scripts can identify the constitutive rationalities which direct the broad axis of the state. As du Toit has cautioned:

*Any generalization about such a broad assemblage of discourses, institutions and practices should of course be made and treated with caution. Whatever hypothesis or interpretation one makes of their ‘logic’ or nature is always largely inductive. Discursive formations are often messy, and are characterized at one and the same time by order and pattern as well as disorganization, misalignment and contradiction.*

(Du Toit, 2012: 7)

### **2.4.2 Biopolitics**

The modern art of government draws on what Foucault terms a “biopolitics”, that is “a politics concerning the administration of life, particularly as it appears at the level of populations...From this perspective biopolitics is concerned with the family, with housing, living and working conditions...patterns of migration, levels of economic



growth and the standards of living” (Dean, 2010: 121). Foucault’s genealogy of government, which is seen through the minutely inscribed lens of European history, analyses the different meanings and changing scope of understandings of government across historical eras. Agamben examines how Foucault traces the emergence of biopolitics:

*Michel Foucault ... summarizes the process by which, at the threshold of the modern era, natural life begins to be included in the mechanisms and calculations of State power, and politics turns into biopolitics.*

(Agamben, 1998: 10)

Foucault explores the emergence of new relationships between the changing concepts of “sovereignty, discipline and governmental management which has the population as its main target and the apparatuses of security as its central mechanism” (Foucault, 2007: 107–8 in Dean, 2010: 122). He observes how these mechanisms for exercising power through the multiple mundane practices of government engender diverse forms of resistance in the contestation between state and individual “vehicles of power” (Foucault, 1980: 98 in Mills, 2003: 35).

Foucault differentiates between two modalities of power: the historical power of the sovereign, which he characterises as the power to “make die and let live” and modern biopolitical power “aimed at enhancing the lives of a population through the application of the norm” (Dean, 2010: 121) but which continues to tacitly embody the power to “make live and let die” also explored by Li (2010).

### **2.4.3 Governmentality**

The conceptual framework for this case study enquiry aims to facilitate an analytics of government which illuminates the governmental practices that Foucault terms “the ‘governmentalisation’ of the state” (Foucault, 1991: 103). Governmentality, for Foucault, involves analysis of who can govern and who is governed, and the means

through which this “conduct of conduct” is achieved (Mills, 2003: 47). Analysis of governmentality rests on Foucault’s subtle rendering of the relational workings of power which challenge earlier and rigidly structural perspectives focused exclusively on relations of domination and the oppressive role of the state, refuting the notion that power is singularly possessed and exercised over the other by the state.

In thinking about governmentality we need to locate notions of statecraft within the context of a neoliberal and increasingly globalised world in which new boundaries have been drawn that are vastly more permeable. We need to recognise that the conceptualisations of ‘the state’ and the operations of government, both globally and in the South, form part of a much changed post-Foucauldian reality which requires us to “modify, innovate and sometimes to reject his and our own earlier concepts, approaches, arguments and analyses” (Dean, 2010: 7).

Dean helps to clarify the relationship between government and the state:

*In most cases the question of government is identified with the state i.e. with a sovereign body that claims a monopoly of independent territorial power and means of violence, that inheres in but lies behind the apparatuses or institutions of organised and formal political authority and that is separate from the rulers and the ruled.*

(Dean, 2010: 116)

He notes that “the study of governmentality regards the exercise of power and authority as anything but self-evident and in need of considerable analytic resources”. The constructions and workings of post-colonial states provide new perspectives and starting points for analysis. Some argue that these represent a “hollowing out” of the (idealised) Northern conceptualisation of the operation of the state and its replacement by a “shadow state” (Harriss-White, 2003) that Corbridge

et al. characterise as “a vast assemblage of brokers, advisors, political workers, crooks and contractors [which] surrounds the ‘official state’ and helps to ensure that it is run for the private benefit of some of its employees” (2005: 4) – a characterisation which suggests lines of enquiry to investigate the frequent failure of megaprojects to realise their intended improvements.

Lemke offers important perspectives on the technologies of rule which provide conceptual tools for thinking about the state, irrespective of geopolitical context. He notes that:

*Government defines a discursive field in which exercising power is “rationalised.” Ways in which this occurs include the delineation of concepts, the specification of objects and borders, and the provision of arguments and justifications. In this manner, government makes it possible to address a problem and offers certain strategies for managing or solving the problem.*

(Lemke, 2007: 2)

Lemke questions the perceived intrinsic ‘factuality’ of the state, arguing that “according to Foucault, government by state agencies must be conceived of as a contingent political process and a singular historical event in need of explanation, rather than a given fact” (2007: 5). This conceives the state as a “transactional reality” [*réalité de transaction*] (Foucault, 2004: 301), which combines “a dynamic ensemble of relations and syntheses that at the same time produces the institutional structure of the state and the knowledge of the state” (Lemke, 2007: 6).

Mitchell points to the implications of Foucauldian analytics for both our image of the state and our construction of figures of resistance to it:

*...just as we must abandon the image of the state as a freestanding agent issuing orders, we need to question the traditional figure of resistance who stands outside the state and refuses its demands. Political subjects and their*

*modes of resistance are formed as much within the organisational terrain we call the state, rather than in some wholly exterior social space.*

(Mitchell, 1991: 93)

Gupta offers a welcome Southern caution which “attends to the historical and cultural specificity of constructions of the state” and which also urges “vigilance toward the imperialism of Western conceptual apparatus” (1995: 393). Gupta’s approach involves a close analysis of practices and representations “to arrive at a historically and ideologically constructed understanding of the state” and those groupings and institutions which contest, negotiate and collaborate with it (ibid.).

#### **2.4.4 The ‘apparatus’**

The biopolitical priorities of the state and the “conduct of conduct” which is governmentality at work are made visible through Foucault’s concept of the “*dispositif*”, frequently defined as the apparatus and procedures at the heart of the day-to-day transactions between the state and society. This is a thoroughly “heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, moral and philanthropic propositions – in short the said as much as the unsaid” (Foucault, 1977a: 194). The focus is on the nature of the connections between these diverse elements and the rationality of which they are an expression. According to Foucault the apparatus “reveals the nature of the connection that can exist between these heterogeneous elements. Thus, a particular discourse can figure at one time as the programme of an institution, and at another it can function as a means of justifying or masking a practice which itself remains silent, or as a secondary re-interpretation of this practice, opening out for it a new field of rationality” (ibid.: 194–195).

Foucault cautions that the wide array of elements and instruments associated with the apparatus of the state do not secure its dominance and power. He points to

complex interplays, jostlings and oscillations in the circuits of power and knowledge:

*The state, for all the omnipotence of its apparatuses, is far from being able to occupy the whole field of actual power relations, and further because the state can only operate on the basis of other, existing power relations.*

(Foucault, 1979: 64)

Agamben presents the *dispositif* as an aggregate which “includes just about everything; linguistic and non-linguistic, discourses, institutions, architecture, laws, police measures, scientific statements, philosophical and moral propositions” (Agamben, 2005: 1). This includes the associated apparatus and procedures which give effect to state policies and the working of its institutions: its planning systems, procedures and regulations, the systems of intergovernmental relations, the allocation of budgets, and systems of decision-making, prioritisation and distribution of political responsibility which are the particular focus of this research. These are the extrusions of associated processes of governmentality and systems of biopower.

Theories of urban planning form part of this apparatus and conceptualise the relationship between planners and people in different ways (Watson, 2006; Brownill and Carpenter, 2007). Their focus is predominantly on the practice of planning and associated professional conduct, which often lacks a thoroughgoing theorisation of the relations of power (Moulaert and Cabaret, 2006). They are often silent on the character and role of the state in the government of space and overlook the institutional interface between departments and spheres of government in its management. This component within the state axis remains infused with residual modernist and rational certainties. Rational planning theory has deep modernist and positivist roots which draw on “the so-called rational scientific method of expert

analysis and policy formation [which] displaced an earlier tradition that emphasised the history and geography of place” (Healey and Upton, 2010: 8), and on a universalist view of the “world as a homogeneous place that can be understood and managed using science” (Perrera, 2010: 152), where there is a perceived link between rational planning and the welfare of all (Zhu, 2010).

Spatial and development planning are components within the apparatus which distil and give effect to the dominant thinking within the state. James C Scott has made important observations on the business of statecraft and its “focus on rationalising and standardising the social hieroglyph”(1998: loc 131). His observations resonate with those of the *Anti-Politics Machine* (Ferguson, 1994), in which state and international aid ‘development’ officials cast themselves in the role of “politically neutral artisans” (1994: 178) who, in the process of planning and implementing predetermined development projects, “re-arrange” local realities to filter out, neutralise and “render technical” the politics and contestations associated with these interventions. In this script government is conceptualised as a “machine for delivering services, not as a political fact” (ibid.). Ferguson explores how the failure of these initiatives is always framed within technicist discourses about ‘good’ and ‘bad’ development projects which serve to obscure and sidestep the all-important underlying political, economic and social questions. Scott highlights how optics of the state are strategically filtered, allowing it to see what it wants to see:

*These state simplifications, the basic givens of modern statecraft were...rather like abridged maps. They did not successfully represent the actual activity of the society they depicted, nor were they intended to; they represented only that slice of it that interested the official observer. They were, moreover, not just maps. Rather, they were maps that, when allied with state power, would enable much of the reality that they depicted to be remade.*

(Scott, 1998: loc 133)

Elsewhere Scott argues that that “no abstract force, collectivity, or system ever arrives at the door of human experience, except as it is mediated by concrete, particular human ‘carriers’” (Scott, 2005: 398). These ‘carriers’ are represented in the multiple faces of the state and its agents, which often act in confusing interrelationship with one another.

As is examined further below, these ‘simplifications’ of the state in its bids to eradicate informality, restore order and redraw the frontiers of power encounter the wills to thrive and survive amongst groupings of the informal poor, pressing diverse claims on space and place and pursuing multiple strategies of struggle. This complex amalgam of forces is explored along the counterposed axis within the present conceptual framework.

## **2.5. Wills to survive and thrive**

This section theorises how the programmes of the state, infused with the ‘will to govern and improve’, are interpreted, accommodated and countered by the logics and strategies of struggle of groupings of the poor in their bid to survive and thrive.<sup>10</sup> Against the deeply theorised axis of the state discussed above is ranged the axis inhabited by the subjects of historical and contemporary state planning. Many who live in conditions of informality may simultaneously welcome the state’s promises of formalisation and yet resist them in practice, as groupings of the poor encounter the disjuncture between the rhetoric and practice of state development.

Informality is an important element within this axis. It is a term commonly used in two ways: as an economic concept relating to informal work (with a history of

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<sup>10</sup> It is useful to reflect on the etymology of the word ‘thrive’, which has its roots in the Middle English meanings ‘grow’ and ‘increase’, from the Old Norse ‘grasp or get hold of’. This older meaning better reflects strategies of struggle utilised by the poor to grasp that which has the potential to transcend “bare life” (Agamben 1998).

literature on changing labour markets and the so-called ‘informal sector’); or as a description of ways of occupying land and creating settlements outside legal and planning frameworks. The present conceptual framework focuses primarily on the latter use of the term, while recognising that there may be linkages between the informal settlement form and the livelihood strategies of its inhabitants (although this is by no means a given). Informality in this sense entails a continuum between what can be termed ‘micro informalities’, associated with the takeover of formal structures and dwellings, usually to accommodate more people than the number for which they were designed; the penetration of the formal by the informal through the construction of backyard shacks as extensions of existing formal structures; and finally the erection of freestanding informal settlements not located or laid out in line with official spatial plans for areas like Joe Slovo in Langa.

### **2.5.1 Conceptions of urbanism and informality**

This section reviews the place of informality in the new urbanism, and illuminates key narratives characterising informality in the literature, with a focus on the extent to which informality could be said to embody a particular rationality.

At a continental level mainstream narratives have long cast urbanisation as a ‘problem’, as the pace of rural-urban migration has outstripped the capacity of urban areas to meet service and shelter needs (Coetzer, 2012). Pieterse reflects on the “drivers of urban failure” in Africa, arguing that the “prevailing government attitude [is] that urbanisation is something bad...that needs be prevented and, failing that reversed through effective rural development policies, leading to a refusal to provide for ‘illegal’ urban dwellers” (2010: np). Accelerating urbanisation quickly perforated the African post-independence faith in modernisation and the belief that “science and technocrats could forge a new world” (Amis, 1990: 3), but over the last decade theorists from the global South have pointed out that informality is now entrenched within the urban fabric. Bank (2011: 11–12) observes how the “collapse of



modernist urban planning regimes in post-independence African cities has created new spaces for the ‘reconstruction of the rural in the urban’” highlighting the renegotiation of social meanings which accompany changing demography.

In response to the pressures of urbanisation, institutions of urban governance and the planners who regulate space and guard the outlines of the formal planned city have increasingly entered into ambiguous and uneasy accommodations with informality. These relationships are best expressed in terms of a continuum which varies considerably from city to city and era to era, with official state responses ranging from hostility, eviction and attempts to eradicate informal settlements at one end of the continuum, through doing nothing or the bare minimum to manage informality, to, at the opposite end, embarking on upgrading strategies with a predominantly grudging but sometimes more enthusiastic embrace of the settlements. The place of the informal in the city, and its situation in relation to the perceived norm of the formal, remains obscure and uncertain at best:

*Despite its centrality to contemporary urbanism, informality remains peripheral to debates in urban studies. Notwithstanding a wealth of work examining informality’s historical production ... there have been few attempts to theorise relations between informality and formality.*

(McFarlane and Waibel, 2012: 1)

Ferguson (2007) provides a compelling account of the changing discourse around informality, in which a shift can be discerned from perspectives which formerly implied threatening disorder, even “monstrosity”, to ones in which informality is “increasingly likely to be interpreted as [a source of] assets, capacities or opportunities” and incorporated into a neoliberal lexicon, a critique echoed by Roy (2011). However, Ferguson observes that the actors on the set of informality continue to remain in the shadows, as “people who are neither wage labourers, (they do not

have jobs in the usual sense), nor peasant farmers (they do not own land and often do not have access to it)" (Ferguson, 2007: 76).

Ferguson goes on to ask an important question:

*How are these people bound to the institutions of the wider state and society?  
We know them by a series of unilluminating names (the informal sector, the  
lumpen, the youth), but we have only a very weak sense of how to engage with  
them, either analytically or politically.*

(2007: 76)

Roy notes that "informality, once associated with poor squatter settlements, is now seen as a generalized mode of metropolitan urbanisation" (2005: 147). However, as Varley (2010: n.p.) has observed, renderings of the informal are beset with a variety of stereotypes. These include a "fascination with informal settlements as a dark and dangerous Other" which Robinson (2006: 5) has criticised as being part of the "noir futuristic urban genre of decline and despair". The treatment of informality ranges from the homogenising and 'apocalyptic visions' (Angotti, 2006) associated with variations on the *Planet of Slums* narrative (Davis, 2006) to the indeterminate "grey spaces" located on a continuum between the 'whiteness' of formality, with its associated legitimization, and the 'blackness' of "eviction/destruction/death" (Yiftachel, 2009). Informal settlements are conceived of as spaces of new forms of social resistance to the neoliberal order, zones of gestation for the emergence of translocal social movements, sites of incremental opportunity, spatial interstices which enable subtle day-to-day appropriations and advances through the practices of "quiet encroachment" (Bayat, 2000a).

Wade (2009: 14) further highlights the emergence of contesting global discourses and perspectives on informality. He cites Mitchell (2002: 210) to the effect that "objects of analysis" such as informal settlements do not exist independently as "natural

phenomena, but are partly formed by the discourse that describes them". He identifies five different narratives shaping the discourses around informality. The dominant narrative is that informality is an indicator of "deficiency", an affront to the modern; a rent in the fabric of the city that must be "filled in, and injected with support", or eradicated. This is offset by a second, more cautious narrative to the effect that informality remains misunderstood as something that has emerged "beyond modernity's peripheral vision" (Fabricius, 2008: 7), and which occupies "an interstitial space that remains yet undefined and without an appropriate degree of recognition". The third narrative echoes McDonald's (2008) argument that informality is a marker of inequality, "a manifestation of tensions... that emerge from a neoliberal, postcolonial world of inequality and unequal distribution of resources" (ibid.: 16). The fourth narrative directly counters the first account with the proposition that "informal settlements and their inhabitants have something to offer, rather than merely being passive beneficiaries of aid or a drain on the city's economic ambitions" (Wade, 2009: 19). A fifth narrative is dismissive of all the others, proposing that informality represents "a reversal of the perceived direction of progression in urbanism", an epistemic rupture which rethinks the future of the city and the relation between the global North and South which, as Comaroff and Comaroff (2011: 1) propose, will "invert the established order of things", suggesting that Euro-America is progressively "evolving towards Africa" and in so doing mounting "a challenge to the Western European *telos* of modernity".

While there are widely different readings of informality, and some theoretical inferences which can be drawn about the nature of its possible rationality, overall this remains a poorly understood domain, best characterised by the locality-specific quantum of resilience of those who fight to survive and thrive, often in tenuous urban settings, and who navigate complex micropolitics in pursuit of claims on space, place and belonging through diverse strategies of struggle.

In the South African setting, informality is relentlessly shadowed by discourses of 'improvement' and by multiple conceptions of the imperative to intervene. Focusing specifically on the post-apartheid city, Huchzermeyer and Karam (2006: 4-6) highlight how many 'solutions' developed through the state and the market ensures that the resultant formalisation and redevelopment initiatives "are traded to a social class other than the original informal settlement dwellers". Such development displaces the poor new and even more poorly located informal settlements on the periphery of cities.

Local narratives which predominate in the rendering of informality are those which focus on the particulars of the built environment. Aerial photography provides surveillance and generates maps to quantify structures and re-engineer space (Zibagwe, 2012). This provides the numbers and spatial attributes which render settlements legible in policy and planning discourse, and it is these dimensions with which upgrading interventions primarily engage. However the life histories and demographics of the occupants all remain largely opaque: their trajectories of entry, internal mobility and potential exit, and the multiple factors which determine this; their relative social and economic differentiation; how they acquire, construct, dispose of, subdivide, extend and rent dwellings; the relations of sociality and the affordances of power which enable or constrain settlement access and determine relative security and social cohesion; the place which the informal dwelling occupies in the larger landscapes of people's lives and livelihoods; and the dispersed webs of social and spatial connection with their associated systems of meaning.

Overall this axis of informality can only be illuminated by the interplay between the perceptions of those who live within a settlement, those alongside it for whom it may represent a threat or an opportunity, and those outside who would seek to 'improve' it. This demands a conceptual framework that can enable the exploration of the diverse perspectives on informality, one which can fulfil its potential for

theoretical sense-making without succumbing to the delusion that it can present the “totality of relations at play” (Gupta and Ferguson, 1997). This framework also has to engage with the changing phenomenon of migrant labour and the multi-directional intersections between rural continuities of migration and urban informality, which are explored below.

### **2.5.2 Rural linkages and the urban informal**

The historical forces of dispossession and the extent of asset theft and degradation in the rural hinterlands are well documented (Desmond, 1969; Blondel et al., 1985; Platzky and Walker, 1985; Walker, 2008). These forces continue to underpin contemporary structural poverty and inequality, and fuel “adverse incorporation of millions of poor black South Africans who find themselves excluded from the economy as farmers, growers, producers, workers and traders but *included* as consumers of the manufactured goods and services created by the South African core economy” (Du Toit and Neves, 2013: n.p. emphasis in the original). This has spawned dispersed, yet closely intertwined spatial geographies of impoverishment which continue to connect rural former Bantustans with the logic of informality in the city as a consequence of continued circular migration, which remains a strong feature of post-apartheid South Africa (Posel and Casale, 2006).

The act of migration can itself be seen as an expression of the ‘will to survive and thrive’ which connects rural and urban space. In the South African context it can be argued that migration represents the continuity between past and present which serves to deepen the lines on the face of entrenched rural poverty, etched by a particular history and exacerbated by neoliberal economics which continue to make migration a requirement for survival. And yet analysis of local social and economic hierarchies of relative well-being still reveals a strata of successful men and women who have built up their assets in rural villages through a lifetime of migrant work (Du Toit and Neves, 2013). This, coupled with the discourses about ‘a better life’,

also aligns migration with possibilities to thrive – to break free from the known poverties and routines of rural and small town existence and acquire the material markers of success of life in the city.

Despite a growing shift “from circular or oscillating to more permanent urban migration” (Hall, 2010: 2) it seems that the rural home still retains centrality in the world of the circular migrant as a site of meaning, retirement investment and the place where people plan to die or be buried. As Cox and Hemson observe from their research in KwaZulu-Natal, urbanisation is a slow, multifactorial process:

*The gradual shift in the center of gravity of a person's life from the deep rural areas to the city needs to be viewed as slow, tentative, perhaps never fully completed in a person's lifetime: a process of gradual disembedding from one and embedding in another, signified by changing patterns of association, visiting patterns, marriage choices, and the creation of new networks independent of the 'home boys' on whom migrant workers typically rely. But it is the gradualness, even tentativeness of the process that we want to emphasize here.*

(Cox and Hemson, 2008: 201)

The persistent nature of rural-urban linkages has important implications for the rationality of informality and for understandings of the multiple dimensions of the ‘will to survive and thrive’ that shape the lives of circular migrants who find themselves in urban informal settlements. As Hall has observed, the continuing attachment of temporary migrants to their home of origin may mean that there is less incentive to invest in improving their urban housing situation. However, this is more complex than it first appears:

*There is some circular reasoning in that inadequate and overcrowded urban living environments may be a deterrent to permanent migration (for instance*

*where the migrant cannot provide adequate accommodation for family members), while at the same time segmented household structures require division of resources (for instance between an urban and rural home), reducing the income surplus for incremental improvements to urban housing.*

(Hall, 2010: 4 - 5)

These observations contribute important strands to the logic of informality, and suggest valuable perspectives for understanding the 'will to survive and thrive', something which is not easily calibrated through the conventional money metric indicators of economic well-being. Further, it must be recognised that this will is seldom an expression of a singular undertaking focused on the well-being of the individual. It encompasses duties of care manifested through an intricate series of strong or weak, primarily gender-mediated attachments to extended, multi-generational families. These constellations of kin may combine in multiple constructions that sit uneasily with conventional definitions of 'the household'. This means that an informal settlement is probably better conceptualised as a hub connecting nodes in a network of places which are the aggregate of the rural 'sending areas'. And this, in turn, implies that the 'will to survive and thrive' is not simply anchored in the settlement itself but spans diverse localities. People reliant on one another often live in widely dispersed locations, but with more frequent and varied connections than were possible just a decade ago. Overall, despite a volume of research, there remain unanswered questions about the contemporary nature of rurality, its influence on the rationalities of informality and place in relation to plans for the city.

The preceding sections have highlighted how the 'will to survive and thrive' of groupings of the poor, living in conditions of informality remain focused by hoped-for improvement in circumstances, a transition from 'bare life' to something more than mere survival. While the 'will to govern and improve' is narrated through bold

stories and communiqués, and is discernible through state technologies of rule, the ‘will to survive and thrive’, like informality itself, is less easy to pin down. It carries the cumulative histories of migration and dispossession articulated in multiple ways that reflect a host of “molecular “ struggles (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) linking place and space. The following sections aim to provide some theoretical framing for key dimensions of the ‘will to survive and thrive’, and reveal the scripts and theatres for their performance.

### **2.5.3 Micropolitics**

The term ‘micropolitics’ originates with Deleuze and Guattari (1987), who contrasted “molar structures”, referring to centralised and hierarchical organisations and institutions, with the concept of a “molecular” organisation, denoting a particular quality of flexible “micropolitics”. They argued that “every politics is simultaneously a macropolitics and a micropolitics” (ibid.: 213). The concept of micropolitics was subsequently associated with Foucault’s focus on the “daily struggles at the grassroots level among those whose fight was located in the fine meshes of the web of power. This was where the concrete nature of power became visible, along with the prospect that these analyses of power would prove fruitful in accounting for all that had hitherto remained outside the field of political analysis” (Foucault, n.d-b: 58).

In this axis of the conceptual framework the concept of micropolitics is employed to denote locally specific, grounded, complex and layered interplays of power and knowledge. This is the zone of multiple encounters. It is in part the zone where the practical situated knowledge of urban residents in particular spaces is marshalled, in diverse grammars of resistance, against “the forcible imposition of state simplifications” (Corbridge et al., 2005: 17), echoing Scott (1998). Agents of the state have neither the time and inclination, nor the optics to engage with and process the molecular particularities of micropolitics. This is partly why state schemes for



improvement of people's lives, with all their inherent simplifications, are so quickly assailed by local complexity. This is what makes the zone of micropolitics the most productive for the capture of the clash of rationalities. The response of the state in such circumstances is often to tighten its grip on its simplifications and force through its vision and plans (Scott, 1998). However it is in such instances that the multiple strands of micropolitics can (momentarily) fuse into a potent macropolitical force to effect ruptures and reversals of power.

The concept of micropolitics helps to clarify how groupings of the poor living in conditions of informality in Joe Slovo see, and are seen by the state and other social groupings living in Langa, and provides insight into the complex of factors which mould this relationship. At the local level, micropolitics are present in the gazes exchanged between neighbours, between informal settlement residents and occupants of different precincts within the formal township, between residents in the informal settlement and the various officials of the state, the employees and activists associated with civil society organisations. They reveal the day-to-day mediations between neighbours within micro localities, their relations of reciprocity and their interactions over water, bucket toilets, trade, noise, violence, order and disorder. In this conception the granular character of micropolitics can be discerned percolating through capillaries of kin, faith, belief and affiliation to shape the flows of power.

They animate the invisible social grids that constitute the settlement. They are plastic and adaptive, and can quickly switch from the quiescent to the militant. They are concerned with what Thrift (2008: 2) has termed the "geography of what happens".

The micropolitics and tangle of social relations associated with informality unbundle conventional notions of 'community' and provides insight into complex social circuitries and workings of power and associated strategies of struggle. Such strategies can involve a mix of accommodation, "quiet encroachment" (Bayat, 2000a), passive non-co-operation and active resistance to the improvements driven by the

developmental state in its bid to govern and improve. As is examined further below, these micropolitics are inherently connected with space and the interplays between people in places.

#### **2.5.4 Claims on space and place**

Bank draws usefully on Kolb's (2008) distinction between 'dense' and 'diluted' spaces:

*Dense spaces have multiple layers of memory, routine and shared experience, while diluted spaces tend to be defined by single stranded relations and a certain shallowness of experience...Kolb speaks of the complexity of urban spaces, by which he means the level to which they are connected to places and process beyond the space itself".*

(Bank, 2011: 14)

Bank cites Harrison and Dourish (1996), who distinguish between space and place, proposing that "we are located in space but we act in place" (Bank, 2011: 15).

Harrison and Dourish describe "place as space with something added – social meaning, convention, cultural understandings about role, function, nature and so on" (Harrison and Dourish, 1996: 3).

Kolb's conception of dense and diluted spaces interpenetrated by the place-based histories, replete with social affiliations, meanings and entitlements, is particularly valuable for capturing the strength of social connections invested in place and locality within Langa. It has the potential to disclose and disaggregate locality-linked 'micro rationalities', which are revealed as the kernels of local contestations once their often invisible order is disturbed or their space and place claims denied.

Bank's characterisation of Duncan Village as "a single township that embodied many different places" with associated meanings and behaviours has been harnessed for the theoretical conceptualisation of Langa – a township of equivalent

vintage, with its particular spatial genealogy once clearly demarcated but since blurred by the infusion of informality, an urban switchboard connected, like the tangle of lines of an analogue telephone exchange with numerous abodes in the rural hinterlands of the Eastern Cape.

*...I encountered a complex, diverse and socially dense place, which was fragmented into smaller residential niches, but which remained inextricably linked to the surrounding hinterland, as well as its own sense of history, as a place with a particular identity.*

(Bank, 2011: 15)

The social relations of place are produced by the changing history and periodisation in the settlement of space. Their balance is fragile. Social relations may be diluted or strengthened through myriad encounters and internal contestations which reflect the heterogeneous strategies of individuals and their families to secure claims on space and place as they engineer precarious livelihoods and secure a foothold in the city. These strategies oscillate between:

- living frugally in informal urban spaces to enable mobility and avoidance of unnecessary costs to secure and grow the place of the rural home;
- securing formal well-located living spaces in the city which provide an urban gateway for family members, or as an asset which can be rented or possibly sold informally;
- combinations of the two.

They reveal how the 'will to survive and thrive' in conditions of urban informality is enacted through a contingent array of strategies of struggle. These elements interact like musicians in an improvisational jazz quartet who extemporise with each other – one member takes a lead, others provide backing or may wait in silence listening for a way back in. There are periods of play, contextual interludes when the different

instruments combine to find a particular rhythm and tempo which can push micropolitics to a point where they assume a more overt macropolitical form. Li identifies the critical moments which can trigger a reverse 'switch' in the flows and relations of power between groupings of the poor and the state "in which an expert discourse is punctured by a challenge that it cannot contain" (Li, 2007b:11). A deeper understanding of strategies of struggle, discussed below, reveals more about the mechanics of this two-way switch and concludes the discussion on this axis of the framework.

### **2.5.5 Strategies of struggle**

There are numerous theoretical readings of the nature of the struggles which are a feature of the relationship between groupings of the poor and the disciplinary reach of the state. These span both structural and post-structural frameworks and reflect their perspectives on the character and operations of power.

In his early writings Scott set out to chronicle from a structural perspective what he termed "*everyday* forms of peasant resistance...most of which stop well short of collective outright defiance" (Scott, 1985: 29). His insights into "the weapons of the weak" and the workings of everyday resistance reveal a subtle understanding of the finer gearings of power which prefigures his post-structural turn. He makes the important observation that the weak do not have a monopoly on these weapons, "as anyone can easily attest who has witnessed landlords and officials resisting and disrupting state policies which are to their disadvantage" (ibid.: 30). Scott's focus on obscure, everyday acts of resistance and "self-help" has much in common with how Bayat articulates "the quiet encroachment of the ordinary" (Bayat, 2000a: 545).

Bayat asks "what do the grassroots think or do? What form of politics, if any at all, do the urban marginalised groups espouse?" (2000a: 535). He reviews and critiques the different theoretical conceptions of the poor, and presents a typology of their

practices of power and relationship to struggle. This typology spans the "passive poor" locked into a "culture of poverty" as conceptualised by Lewis (1959); the "surviving poor" who act to secure their survival but who are not endowed with agency of resistance; the "political poor", seen principally through a Latin American lens in "which the urban subaltern emerged as political actors" and were regarded as the possible impetus for new social movements; and the "resisting poor" whom he locates within Foucault's "'decentered' notion of power... which offered a key theoretical paradigm for micro-politics and thus the 'resistance' paradigm" (Bayat, 2000a: 541). While Bayat acknowledges that the post-structuralist approach "helps to uncover the complexity of power relations in society, in general and of the subaltern in particular" (ibid.: 542), he is correctly critical of the many excesses of post-structuralist scholarship which has sought and found 'resistance' anywhere that it looked, has conflated awareness of oppression with action against it, and most seriously of all, has tended to "underestimate state power, notably its class dimension" (2000a: 544). This is a concern shared by Li, as discussed above. Bayat seeks to dismiss the "conceptual perplexity" of the post-structural canon and proposes the concept of "quiet encroachment" to describe a strategy of struggle which involves the silent, protracted but pervasive advancement of ordinary people on the propertied and the powerful, in order to survive and improve their lives. However, what this approach seems to overlook is the relations between groupings of the poor themselves. Indeed the unstated presumption of many renderings of struggle is that this struggle is something waged between relatively homogeneous groupings of the poor and relatively uniform and undifferentiated representations of the state. There is a silence about the different terrains involved – the space-place grounding of struggle and the fact of relations of struggle *between* groupings of poor. There are assumptions that the poor, individually or collectively, are ranged against an 'up there' state which is imbued with uncharacteristic uniformity of purpose.

The presence of intra-poor and intra-state struggles, and the factors which characterise their workings, have enormous influence for the nature of the manoeuvres between the actors aligned with the 'will to govern and improve' and those seeking to 'survive and thrive' – quietly or otherwise. This element of the conceptual framework of this study seeks to build on Foucauldian readings of power, struggle and resistance without homogenising either 'the poor' or 'the state'. It fuses Bayat's concepts of the "surviving poor" and the "resisting poor" and examines the circumstances in which day-to-day strategies of survival and resistance may periodically combine to morph the "surviving" and "resisting poor" into the "political poor". These provide the theoretical tools used in this study to examine how individuals and groupings of the poor living in overcrowded hostels, backyards and the informal settlement have engaged in myriad silent subversions of state authority. These have taken many different forms, including:

- erection of informal dwellings and the takeover of formal structures abandoned by employers and municipal authorities;
- withholding of rent and service charges and the effecting of irregular service connections;
- exploiting confusion in the aftermath of disaster to obtain resources and gain inclusion on important lists and databases;
- seeking influence with those in control of allocation procedures in order to infiltrate those willing to pay a fee in exchange for a site or a housing unit.

The framework enables a close examination of the multifaceted nature of conflicts and contestation, which are not simply in response to, or directed at agents of the state. It aims to reveal how actors in local social settings operate within discursive spaces of power to tell stories about the other, to identify the fault lines which may emerge, and to decipher the fine scripts at the intersection of the wills to govern and

improve and the wills to survive and thrive. In so doing, it seeks to identify the switch points in the circuits of power and knowledge that connect them.

## **2.6. Bridging circuitries of knowledge and power**

Crisscrossing the two axes presented above are circuits of knowledge and power, which provide accounts and offer interpretations of how the world works while tracking the flows of power and marking their switches and reversals. It is these circuits which are the focus of this section. There is a rich literature on the distinction between and practices of expert and situated local/subaltern knowledge, one which traverses different disciplines including health, rural development, ecology and planning (Bouwen et al., 2005; Agrawal, 1993; Bolnick and Patel, 1994; Chambers, 1997; Li, 2005; Connell, 2007; De Souza Santos et al., 2007; Rydin, 2007; Wade, 2009; Healey, 2010; Varley, 2010; Salvemini, 2012). This literature highlights the positivist epistemology underlying much technical knowledge, particularly that deployed within the theatre of the state, as well as in the contemporary business of 'development', which is frequently outsourced through parastatal entities and private sector contractors. This fusion of technical knowledge and bureaucratic procedure encounters ways of knowing and sense making amongst groupings of the poor which are closely indexed to context and situated practice. When these knowledges collide, bureaucratic and technical knowledge frequently seek to override or divert these other forms, often essentialising them through ossified and gendered readings of the social with conventional constructions of 'the household', that filter their perceptions of cultural and social practices of the poor. Technical knowledge, whether wielded by state actors or external professionals, often functions to divert social challenges and to impose its reading of what is feasible and affordable. What is important here is not whether one or other system of knowledge and logic is superior to the other, but the analysis of how and where they clash.

These dynamics draw on Foucault's recognition that power extended beyond the state apparatus:

*One cannot confine oneself to analysing State apparatus alone if one wants to grasp the mechanisms of power in their detail and complexity...In reality, power in its exercise goes much further, passes through much finer channels and is much more ambiguous, since each individual has at his disposal a certain power, and for that very reason can also act as a vehicle for transmitting a wider power.*

(Foucault, n.d-a: 72)

Foucault conceptualises power as something dispersed, contingent and subject to temporal flows and relations:

*Power must be analysed as something which circulates, or rather as something which only functions in the form of a chain. It is never localised here or there, never in anybody's hands, never appropriated as a commodity or piece of wealth. Power is employed and exercised through a netlike organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power. They are not only its inert or consenting target; they are always also elements of its articulation. In other words individuals are the vehicles of power, not the points of its application.*

(Foucault, 1976: 98)

Foucault asserts that where there is power there is resistance. This does not discount attempts at domination as a product of institutionally and socially infused disciplinary power and technologies of rule, but it recognises how such attempts are offset by "the points at which regimes of government meet forms of resistance and



counter products that can reveal and embody possibilities for doing things otherwise" (Dean, 2010: 48).

Foucault argues for a systematic approach to the analytics of power and the apparatus of governmentality: "one needs to investigate historically, and beginning from the lowest level how mechanisms of power have been able to function." He urges an "escape from the limited field of juridical sovereignty and state institutions, asserting that "one must rather conduct an *ascending analysis* of power, starting, that is from its infinitesimal mechanisms which each have their own history, their own trajectory..." (Foucault, 1976: 99 - 100 emphasis added).

Foucault advocates "taking the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point...Rather than using power from the point of view of its own rationality, it consists of analysing power relations through the antagonism of strategies" (Foucault, 2000 [1982]: 329). This suggests that power is expressed and can be understood through the analysis of conflicting strategies, which in turn will cast the shadows thrown by the underlying clash of rationalities.

As discussed in the section on strategies of struggle above, employment of Foucauldian analytics of power must resist any homogenisation of the agents of power, as this will obscure how power is actually exercised and create another simplified narrative about lateralities of power to replace older narratives about its verticality.

## **2.7. The contestation of knowledge and power**

Gupta observes how "the state has become implicated in the minute texture of everyday life" and proposes "an ethnography of the state which involves both analysis of the everyday practices of local bureaucracies and the discursive construction of the state in public culture" (1995: 375). This enables the disaggregation of the state and an understanding of its 'translocality' – the capacity

to be simultaneously present in different spaces and at different removes, depending on the point of vantage. Gupta emphasises that “there is obviously no Archimedean point from which to visualise ‘the state’, only numerous situated knowledges...Constructions of the state vary according to the manner in which different actors are positioned” (1995: 392).

Within South Africa the dominant discourse post-1994 has been about the construction of a developmental state which has “the capacity to give leadership in the definition of a common national agenda and in mobilising all sectors of society to participate in implementing that agenda” (PCAS in Edidheji, 2010: 2). In this rendering the state is the driver of development, which it manages through various planning ‘instruments’, ‘processes’ and ‘mechanisms’ in order to effect ‘delivery’. The instrumental language of technical authority and positivist epistemology permeates this discourse, which is replete with metrics of different kinds to measure performance.

The policy voice of the state is primarily concerned with the legitimisation of technical knowledge. This voice is carefully modulated, as if by an instrumental neutrality in its evocation of ‘harnesses’, ‘levers’, ‘linkages’ ‘mechanisms’, ‘capacities’, ‘interventions’, ‘typologies’, ‘institutions’, ‘transactions’, ‘business plans’, ‘financial arrangements’, ‘outsourcing’ and ‘unblocking of bottlenecks’ within its lexicon. However as the case will reveal the official discourses quickly diverge from these neutral and technical policy scripts in the face to face engagement of agents of state with the poor.

As Scott has observed, officials located within different branches of the local or provincial state, who directly interact with the poor, use an entirely different vocabulary from that found in plans and policy statements. As noted above he finds that they are also skilled in deploying the techniques of foot-dragging and tacit sabotage to divert the agendas of those issuing instructions which they do not

support for political or practical reasons. This suggests the need for a theoretical reading of the state which enables a more idiosyncratic mix of 'pragmatism' and 'passion'. It is at ground level that agents of the 'state' and groupings of 'the poor' – who are almost always described in terms of the shorthand of 'the community' – become visible to one another, their mutual sightings mediated by context-specific interactions between individuals enacting their respective roles. Following Gupta, it is here that the nominally less powerful and prominent members of the state's cast may *ad lib*, adding their own lines and sub-plots to the meta-policy script, and in the process may have an enormous impact on the practices of governmentality. It is also at this level that technical specialists shape the discourses and practices of governmentality, as they strip out the uncertainties and imprecisions embedded in the social and the local from schemes of improvement, replacing them with the certainties of the technical, and the minutiae of administrative rationality.

It is in this space that rationalities frequently collide, and the 'will to govern and improve' is countered by the micropolitics of survival. It is here that the imperatives of survival can be expected to trump technical rationality and frustrate the recommendations of the technicians as the subjects of improvement may reveal themselves as unruly and non-compliant with the grand plans and development imaginaries of the state. The comfortable homogeneity and simplifications assumed in the discourses around 'community' and 'a better life for all' are challenged by the intense heterogeneity characterising micropolitical claims on place and space, claims which are expressed through the diverse strategies of struggle of groupings of the poor that reveal their situated wills to survive and thrive through contesting local spaces of power.

## 2.8. Conflicting rationalities

The theoretical framework as a whole – the divergent axes of the state and its trustees and the axis of the poor living in conditions of informality – pivots on an enquiry about the nature of actor rationalities and the extent to which these conflict. Rationality remains an elusive concept and the subject of theoretical and practical blurring. Lash (1999) observes that “sociology and social science more generally have consistently understood modernity in terms of rationality, in terms of the rationality of Cartesian space and Newtonian time handed down from the Enlightenment”. This is premised on universal claims to truth and on increasing confidence in the *techne* of implementation, which draws on “a stable body of reliable knowledge able to tell us, in fixed terms readily teachable to others, how we ought to live” (Roochnik, 1996: xii).

Lash contrasts the rationality associated with “simple modernity”, where social actors are perceived to be “under the sway of pre-given rules”, with “reflexive modernity”, where individuals “must find... and innovate the rules to use to encounter specific situations” (Lash, 1999: 3 et seq). He observes how “the programmes of social engineering of simple modernity have brought with them their own side-effects, their own unintended consequences” which are fundamentally out of step with the realities of “contemporary risk societies ...in which the impossibility of subsumption of the particular by the pre-given universal” is increasingly recognised as a given. This new social space requires “living with risk, living with ambivalence and contingency” in a context characterised by “the relative decline of institutions and organisations” (ibid: 1999) and their inability to navigate the complexities of post-modernity. It recognises the emergence of contingent street-level, place-based rationalities which condense around the ‘will to survive and thrive’. Rationality is understood as socially and contextually shaped ways of seeing,

interpreting and acting in the world, which also situate and characterise the ‘others’ who make up the cast of actors that interact within the setting.

Foucault points to a distinctive governmental rationality which “draws on and is situated within a heterogeneous assemblage...that combines forms of practical knowledge, with modes of perception, practices of calculation, vocabularies, types of authority, forms of judgement, architectural forms, human capacities, non-human objects and devices, inscriptions, techniques and so forth” (ibid.: 6). While Foucault draws attention to the distinctive nature of governmental rationality, he also highlights the plurality of factors which contribute to this. This heterogeneity suggests that although there are shared features of an overarching governmental rationality, within this subsidiary or tributary wills to govern and improve can be identified. These are brought into focus through analysis of the particular grammars which shape the discourses and narratives of the diverse actors assembled along this axis and which reveal the emergence of contesting governmental, ethical/juridical, bureaucratic/institutional, instrumental/technical and commercial rationalities.

Flyvbjerg and Richardson (2002: 11) present a Foucauldian reading of rationality which is “contingent, shaped by power relations, rather than context-free and objective”. Foucault examines the relationship between power and knowledge, noting that:

*We should admit rather that power produced knowledge ... that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge ...*

(Foucault 1979: 27)

The intersections of changing power-knowledge relationships discussed above are conceptualised as the vehicles for divergent rationalities, in which axes of expert and bureaucratic power /knowledge encounter less visible, but no less assertive,

circuits of knowledge and power of groupings of the poor grounded in the particularities of space and place. Watson (2009: 2270) cites Arce and Long (2000: 1) whose “anthropological perspective on the encounter between Western visions of modernity and the *modi operandi* of other cultural repertoires explores how ‘ideas and practices of modernity are themselves appropriated and re-embedded in locally situated practices, thus accelerating the fragmentation and dispersal of modernity into constantly proliferating modernities’”.

## **2.9. Visualisation and synopsis of the conceptual framework**

A ‘bare bones’ synoptic overview, aiming to capture the essential anatomy of the interlinked elements of the conceptual framework discussed above, concludes this chapter. The framework diagram below visually renders the broad relationships between the elements which make up the conceptual framework that has been developed as the basis from which to address the research questions and direct the design of the retroductive case enquiry.

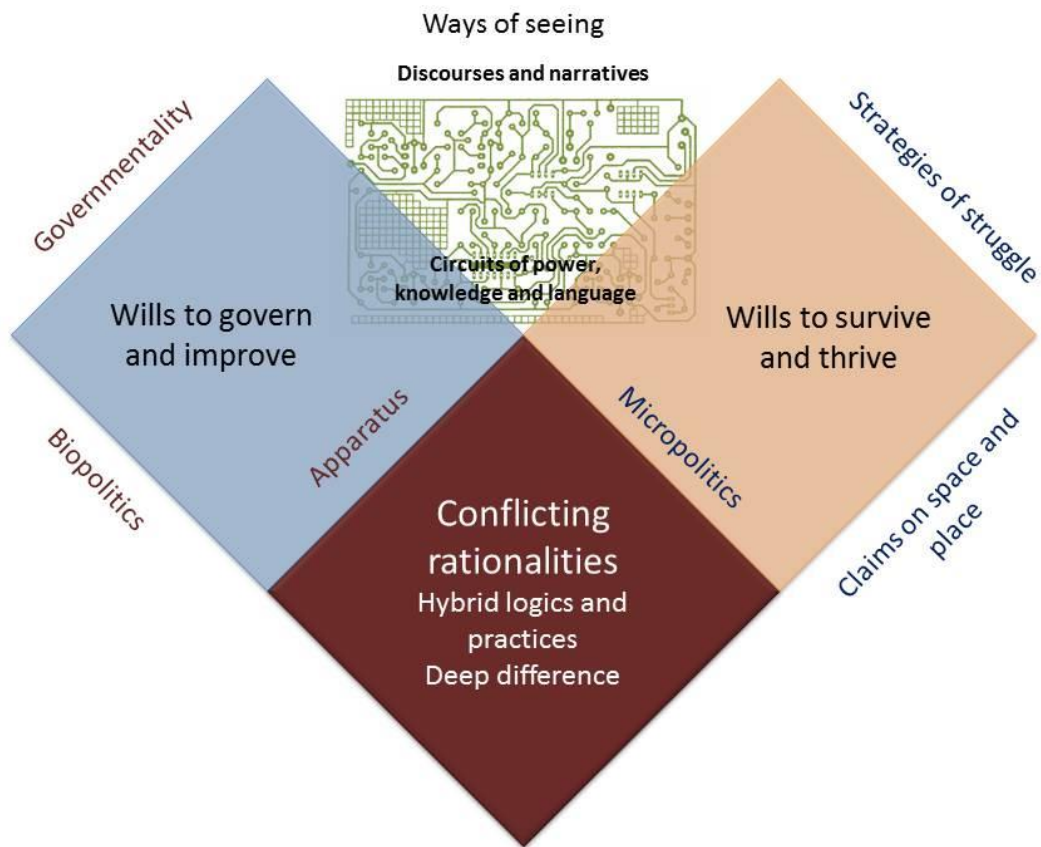


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

The framework is shaped like a V with two axes (blue and brown) which converge conceptually. The left axis (blue) aggregates the diverse formulations and enactments of the 'will to govern and improve' as expressed through the apparatus of social policy, spatial ordering and associated technologies of rule, the practice of politics, the construction of biopolitical order and the workings of governmentality. This is an axis of discourse and practice populated by the strictures of policy, legislation and regulation, the grids and mechanics of institutions and the distribution of state powers and functions. It constitutes the world of state programmes, plans and budgets, objectives and outcomes, 'deliverables' embedded in lines of reporting and accountability driven from the engine room of governmentality. It is an axis which ostensibly espouses legibility, positivist logic

and clarity, but which is characterised by constant attempts by actors within the state and those dependent on its disbursements to redraw lines of authority and render boundaries, rules and procedures more pliant and permeable. This axis locates the plurality of wills to govern and improve and their investigation in the messy interface between the fugitive policies and practices of fragmented organs of state and their subsequent interpretation and implementation by private sector and civil society ‘trustees’ in the orbit of the state.

The framework proposes that as we deconstruct the narratives at the heart of governmentality and examine the interactions between the diverse actors assembled within the blue axis, we need to closely examine the practices of power to detect the threads of political, bureaucratic, juridical, instrumental and commercial rationalities. This exposes their relationships with one another and with the complex of social forces they encounter along the brown axis.

The cast assembled within the brown axis aggregates groupings of the urban poor living in conditions of informality (frequently homogenised by state actors and intermediaries in the blue axis as ‘the community’). However just as the blue axis aggregates the large cast of actors within and associated with the state, so the brown axis brings together the more elusive and dynamic social formations occupying and connected in various ways with a designated urban space – in this instance Langa and Joe Slovo informal settlement, the territory of the case study enquiry. The framework helps to orient the research questions and provides some theoretical keys to deconstruct the social formations which populate and interact within the brown axis. This involves the investigation of molecular-scale micropolitics expressed through particular claims on space and place and advanced through diverse strategies of struggle. This axis comprises a volatile amalgam of the rationalities of groupings of the poor (and not so poor) occupying niches in this deeply spatialised locale and which are expressed in the forms taken by their respective “wills to



survive and thrive". It seeks to enable an examination of how these rationalities are mediated by the maintenance of socio-economic connections of varying strengths with impoverished rural areas which many rural-urban migrants still regard as home.

A translucent circuit board of narratives and discourses spans the two axes. This carries the code transmitted through particular languages and epistemologies to exchange expert and street-level grammars and mark out the flows and reversals of power in sequences of encounters, as officials and agents of the state see and interact with groupings of the poor, abstractly and in space, and are seen and interpreted by them.

Each axis embodies theory underpinning particular ways of seeing the world, which are in turn reflective of contrasting conditions of being, systems of meaning and relative positions in society. The extent and nature of differences which fuel divergence and conflict between rationalities are revealed at the point where the axes converge at the base of the V. It is here where clashes of rationalities are to be found, at the switch points which can trigger reversals in the flows of power.

## **2.10. Conclusion**

This chapter has reflected on the requirements for theory in and from the global South which is equipped to navigate the contested realities of the post-colony and which discards grand narratives about history and society. It has located the theoretical approach of the case study within a Foucauldian post-structural analytic tuned to the techniques and strategies of power, and the ways in which they reflect rationalities underlying the 'will to govern and improve' of actors within the state and their intermediaries, and the 'will(s) to survive and thrive' amongst grouping of the migrant and urban poor living predominantly in conditions of informality. It has elaborated a conceptual framework and specified the key theoretical elements

central to the twin axes. It has counterposed the state axis – with its biopolitical order, the governmentalisation of the state regulating the ‘conduct of conduct’ and the ‘depository’ of its propositions, systems and procedures – with the axis of the urban and migrant poor living in conditions of informality, the micropolitics of their claims on space and place which link rural and urban domains and the diverse strategies of struggle employed to effect these claims. While the framework has examined the factors that set these axes and actors apart and underpin their contestations, it has also identified the circuitries of knowledge and power that traverse and connect them, creating the potential for switches and reversals in the flows of power at the points where rationalities collide.

# Chapter 3

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 3.1. Introduction

Chapter 3 provides a detailed review of the research design and methodology. It reflects briefly on the 'stranged' foundations of qualitative research in the meetings between 'outsiders' and 'insiders' and on interplays of race, class, gender, age and language which shape the research encounter. It provides a justification for the use of the case method. It reviews the evolution and fundamentals of case study research methods and the principal critiques of and rationales for its effectiveness as a research method. It reviews the ways in which case study research is anchored in and generalises back to theory. It elaborates on the retroductive case method introduced in Chapter 1 and examines the relationship between theory and case selection to provide the rationale for the selection of the N2 Gateway as a 'critical' and 'paradigmatic' case before elaborating on the motif which Flyvbjerg (2001) suggests should characterise a paradigmatic case. It sets out the methodological approach, introduces the image-led narrative technique developed as the basis for the majority of interviews, and examines the origins of this technique in photo elicitation research methods. Chapter 3 also examines the elusive nature of meaning in multilingual research settings, and how these meanings are transmitted and distorted through the minutiae of social relations, race and gender dynamics and the associated circuits and flows of power. It examines how meaning can be lost, suppressed or inserted in translation and raises critical questions about the ways in which language curtains the windows through which actor rationalities are seen. The chapter examines the mix of purposive and transect/place-based sampling to obtain diverse narratives of and perspectives on actors with different degrees of

proximity to the case. It reviews the approach to obtaining state and trustee narratives, and narratives from individuals located across space and place in Langa. It provides a breakdown of the interviews conducted and their chronology before discussing the assembly and coding of diverse evidentiary sources that form the case data set, employing NVivo qualitative data management and analysis software. It discusses the coding of data to reflect lines of enquiry, key issues and emerging themes which provides the foundation for thoroughgoing analysis in subsequent chapters. Finally the chapter concludes with a reflexive appraisal of the research process as a whole, and reviews the methods and approaches employed to ensure the quality, validity and reliability of the research.

### **3.2. The ‘stranged’ nature of the qualitative research encounter**

The social setting for this research study, in which an ‘outsider’ engages with diverse categories of ‘insiders’ (within both Langa and external state institutions), amplifies the need for reflexive practices and critical perspectives on the role of the researcher. It requires continued alertness to the complex interplays of race, class, gender, age, voice and language, relative power, authority and meaning and the ways which these combine to shape each research encounter.

Enguix (2014: 81) draws on Velasco and Diaz de Rada (1997) to observe how “strangeness is the ‘black box’ of the research process” and highlights how the ‘stranged’ position of the researcher is a key asset in that allows for a granular appreciation of diversity and difference. These factors are discussed further below and enlarged on in relation to the Langa interviews, with a particular focus on the relationship between the researcher and research assistants, and the dynamics associated with cross-lingual conversations overlaid with perceptions of race and gender. While these issues are of particular significance, Tinker and Armstrong

(2008) caution against the essentialisation of difference and highlight its potential advantages, asserting that:

*By reflecting on their relationship to their respondents and making this explicit, researchers allow their accounts to be judged alongside a range of others in any research area. As well as allowing contrasting accounts to be openly evaluated, an explicit awareness of one's outsider status can also benefit both data collection and analysis*

(Tinker and Armstrong, 2008: 54)

The recognition of difference, coupled with the shifting boundaries determining the distinctions between insiders and outsiders, is at the heart of the image-led methods discussed below which construct narrative bridges to explore and traverse strangeness.

### **3.3. Justifying the use of the case method**

Case study research has a long history. It has been derided and lauded by turns, and the method continues to have its adherents and detractors. There is an exhaustive literature on the case study method (Yin, 1981; Lincoln and Guba, 1990; Stake, 2000; George and Bennett, 2005; Flyvbjerg, 2007; Gerring, 2007; Yin, 2009) and cyclical debates about the validity of case study research, and of the nature of the contribution of case studies and qualitative research more generally to scientific enquiry, which is briefly discussed below.

Debates about the contribution of qualitative research and the value and reliability of knowledge generated through case studies reflect the various iterations of the 'paradigm wars'. These were prominent in the research community during the 1980s and have since re-emerged in the form of "new paradigm dialogues" prompted by the resurgence of a post-positivist agenda in the era of neoliberalism (Denzin, 2008: 316). This is reflected in a rapprochement which explored the possibilities of mixed

methods and the complementarities of 'qual-quant' research. However there is evidence of a more contemporary post-positivist backlash (Denzin et al., 2006; Morse, 2006; Denzin, 2008) and a resurgent tendency of conservative regimes in the global North to attempt to "discipline qualitative research" and promote a new framework to "enforce evidence – or scientifically based, biomedical models of research" (Denzin et al., 2006: 772).

The challenge from this quarter to the case study method and qualitative analysis more broadly stems from concerns about the rigour of qualitative research in general – the nature of its design, the analysis of data and consequent trustworthiness of its findings, where qualitative research can be dismissed as a poorly disciplined "self-delusion" (Miles, 1979: 590). Critics also argue that the case study method is often associated with what are perceived to be "loosely framed and non-generalisable theories, biased case selection, informal and undisciplined research designs" (Gerring, 2007: Loc 87).

However proponents from across the qual-quant divide have questioned the fundamentals underpinning these different paradigms. Constructivists do not subscribe to claims to an 'objective' and 'value-free' science of the type assumed by logical positivism, and dispute its assertion that there is a 'single external reality' which can be illuminated by adherence to statistical principles in study design (Christiaensen, 2001). The growing force of post-structural theory has also led to rejection of these supposed positivist neutralities, and calls for examination of how rationality, knowledge, reason and truth stand in close relation to power. Denzin identifies the key dimensions of a post-structuralist approach to research:

*Over the course of the last two decades poststructuralists have fought hard to claim an interpretative space for enquiry which questioned norms of objectivity, [and] emphasised complexity, subjective interpretative processes, performance, textuality, difference, uncertainty, politics [and] power.*

This echoes Foucault's argument (1990: Vol 1: 61) that "power produces knowledge" and that the production of truth "is thoroughly imbued with relations of power", and indicates how debates about the efficacy and significance of qualitative case study research reflect wider contestations about the nature of knowledge and contrasting positivist and post-structuralist views of the world.

### **3.4. Fundamentals of the case method**

Yin addresses the criticism that case studies "provide little basis for scientific generalisation" by stating that this is not their purpose and that "cases studies, like scientific experiments are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes" (2009: loc 535). Retroductive case research, as outlined in Chapter 1, involves the formulation of a theoretical framework to shape an enquiry into specific "how" and "why" research questions, drawing on multiple sources of evidence, and incorporating "converging lines of enquiry" and the "processes of triangulation and corroboration" (Yin, 2009: loc 2348). This aims to provide the foundation for analysis of the findings in order to reflect and write back to the theory, drawing on "the method of process tracing" which threads through case study research "to test existing hypotheses and justify new ones" (George and Bennett, 2005: 7). Yin advocates a systematic approach to case study research that "includes procedures central to all types of research methods, such as protecting against threats to validity, maintaining 'a chain of evidence' and investigating and testing rival explanations" (2009: loc 323). Golofshani (2003: 602) cites Davies and Dodd, who note that because of the "quantitative bias in the concept of rigor" this needs to be redefined in qualitative research. This redefinition requires "the examination of subjectivity, reflexivity and the social interaction of interviewing" (2002: 279).

Triangulation to control bias and establish the validity of propositions and findings is an essential component of the research design and data collection process. Denzin (1970) identifies the importance of triangulating data through the use of different sources which can extend to theoretical patterning through the application of different theoretical lenses to data analysis. However, triangulation plays a particular role in qualitative research which is distinct from its application in the quantitative paradigm. Golofshani observes that “in using triangulation of several data sources in quantitative research, any exception may lead to a disconfirmation of the hypothesis where exceptions in qualitative research ...modify the theories and are fruitful” (2003: 603). As will be discussed further below, triangulation in the researching of the N2 Gateway case study has been effected through iterative ‘process tracing’ and the identification of thematic threads emerging from different state and non-state interview sources, as well as the interrogation of a wide array of documentation including press releases, policy pronouncements and speeches, project reports, forensic investigations, court proceedings, affidavits and testimonies, in addition to rich veins of media reporting and commentary.

### **3.5. Generalising to theory**

At the centre of the debate around the case study method has been the issue of what, if anything, can be generalised from case study research. Evers and Wu (2006) cite Campbell (1975) to highlight that in case study research the process of generalisation is primarily to theory – and not to other cases. This involves what Campbell describes as a process of “pattern matching” between the framing theory and the empirical observations and analysis of the case. But Evers and Wu caution that this is not a process which allows the researcher to simply ‘discover’ their preconceptions or rationalise their theoretical perspective through the research. Indeed they caution that “single case study researchers do find their theories falsified by case data and do



sometimes have difficulty in finding a particular theory to explain the phenomena of the case” (2006: 523).

As noted in Chapter 1, the research design in this thesis follows a retroductive case approach, rooted in the theory of conflicting rationalities which predicate the ‘will to govern and improve’ and its intersection with the ‘will to survive and thrive’ of groupings of the poor. The design draws on Duminy (in press) and echoes Stake’s (2003 ) conception of an “instrumental case study” as a means of testing and developing theory.

The findings and analysis presented in Chapters 5 to 7 directly engage with the conflicts, ambiguity and indeterminacy which emerge from the different actor narratives, to examine how they might contribute to a theoretical reassessment of the human settlements imaginary and megaproject approaches to planning and development. This recursive approach aims to demonstrate the reflexive potential of case study research to go beyond the documentation and analysis of events and to make contributions to urban social theory and planning practice.

### **3.6. The relationship between theory and case selection**

The classical approach expounded by Yin (2009) posits the researcher in the academy armed with a well-developed theoretical framework and a supporting set of propositions, in search of a critical or paradigmatic case (or comparative cases) well-suited to testing, evaluating and modifying the theory. The theoretical framework set out in Chapter 2 emerged out of an iterative engagement with the N2 Gateway which entailed exploratory research studies and project assessments, indicated by the internal doubled-headed arrow in Figure 2 below. This engagement helped to clarify the research problem, and indicated both what the theory requires with regard to paradigmatic case selection and what the selected case required from the

theory to undertake and analysis. This helped to shape the conceptual framework and identify subsidiary research questions.

The approach that took shape based on these exploratory studies draws on the extended case method expounded by Burawoy (1998), which summarises the essential dynamics and founding premises of case research:

*We begin with our favourite theory but seek not confirmations but refutations that inspire us to deepen that theory. Instead of discovering grounded theory we elaborate existing theory. We do not worry about the uniqueness of our case since we are not as interested in its 'representativeness' as its contributing to reconstructing theory.*

(Burawoy, 1998: 16)

Figure 2 summarises the principal phases in this retroductive case study research process as described in Chapter 1. Like all renderings of this nature the flow diagram represents a simplification of a less linear research approach which involved a continual looping back and forth between phases to test and rework assumptions, reflect on and adapt methods, while refining the research focus and selecting and orienting the theoretical lenses to direct its process.

## Theory-led retroductive research process

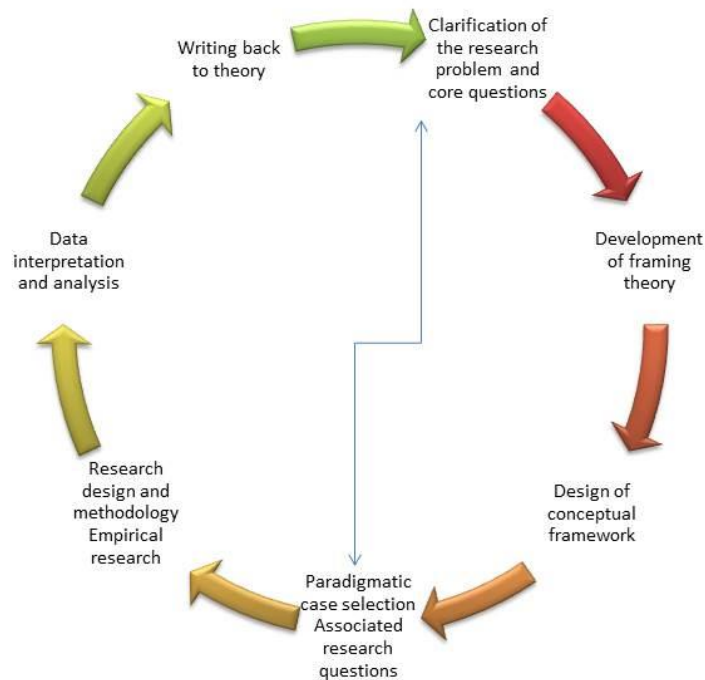


Figure 2: Schematic representation of a theory-led retroductive case research process

### 3.7. Justifying the N2 Gateway as a single paradigmatic case

Flyvbjerg describes a paradigmatic case as one chosen “to develop a metaphor or establish a school for the domain which the case depicts” (Flyvbjerg, 2001), while Yin addresses the criteria for single case selection as follows:

*One rationale for a single case is when it represents the critical case in testing a well formulated theory... A single case, meeting all of the conditions for testing the theory, can confirm, challenge, or extend the theory. The single case can then be used to determine whether a theory’s propositions are correct or whether some alternative set of recommendations might be relevant.*

(Yin, 2009: loc 1201)

Drawing on Flyvbjerg's definition of a paradigmatic case and Yin's rationale for the selection of a single case, this section explains the choice of the N2 Gateway in Langa and its selection ahead of other potential cases, such as the deeply contested District Six or other similar mega projects elsewhere in the country. A range of factors influenced the selection of the N2 Gateway, not least, being the close proximity of the site and access to networks of informants built through previous work in the area. However the fact that the project was the flagship of a new approach to national housing policy, that was setting out to test approaches and learn lessons, was the key determinant for case selection. This is key to ensuring that the N2 Gateway meets all the requirements of a paradigmatic case with the potential to enlarge and write back to planning and broader social theory.

### **3.7.1 The domain and characteristics of the case**

What is the domain that the case depicts and what are the theoretical motifs or metaphors which could emerge from the study of the N2 Gateway? The broad territory of the case is the encounter between the discourses and practices articulated through the human settlements imaginary of an interventionist South African 'developmental state', and their impacts on groupings of the South African poor, living primarily in conditions of informality and located, in this instance, in a well-situated township setting.

The micro domain of encounter affords an examination of how the BNG policy focus on informal settlement upgrading in Joe Slovo, Langa, quickly reverted to a deeply contested exercise in informal settlement eradication. These encounters offer the potential to theorise the central research problem – namely, the ubiquity of failure and unintended consequences emanating from large-scale state development interventions of this nature. The case also provides the setting for the exploration of related research questions focusing on the characteristics of actor rationalities and the oscillations and reversals along the frontiers of power, as actors encounter one

another in the project space. It is contended below that analysis of the case has significant potential to contribute to the enlargement of planning theory and practice grounded in the global South.

The Langa component of the N2 Gateway, with its focus on the Joe Slovo informal settlement, is characterised by elements which are both highly particular – the complex and historically rooted social relations between the informal settlement and the residents of Langa, the particular contestations over space, the attempts to evict and relocate residents, the legal challenge in the Constitutional Court – which at the same time are essentially paradigmatic, given the clash of wills and rationalities that they reveal. The case study unfolds the many layers of contestation within and between organs and spheres of the state, and between the state and groupings of residents and their civil society allies. These span a continuum of resistance which includes a deep history of non-compliance, protest and mass action leading to eventual litigation which went to the Constitutional Court.

It has been persuasively argued that paradigmatic cases of this nature “often reveal more information because they activate more actors and more basic mechanisms in the situation studied” (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 229). The dynamic flows of power which form the preface, body and sequel to this clash have theoretical implications for the formulation of urban policy and associated readings of informality. The case offers the opportunity to test well-developed theory by Li (2007b) and Watson (2003; 2006; 2009) rooted in a Foucauldian analytics of power which articulates the clash between the ‘will to govern and improve’ and the ‘will to survive and thrive’ and the ways in which these struggles are emblematic of conflicting rationalities and their particular contours in the global South. It provides a solid platform to review, reflect on and further develop this theoretical trajectory.

### **3.7.2 The case as metaphor**

As noted at the head of this section, Flyvbjerg (2001) posits that paradigmatic cases often embody or present a memorable motif – a theoretical signifier. The metaphor or motif suggested by this case and its theoretical framing is that of the ‘split screen’. In film-making this involves splitting the visual frame into two, but increasingly it enables the simultaneous juxtaposition of multiple images and action sequences – frames within the frame, each with their own storylines and time scales. The split screen ruptures the illusion of a single frame, with its suggestion of a seamless view of reality and a unitary story. Bizzocchi (2009) reviews how Sergei Eisenstein (1949) explored the visual conflicts suggested by the breakup of the frame into a montage. Montage theory focused on “juxtaposition and the new meaning created by it” (Huttunen, 2005: 3) through conflicts of directions, planes, scales and masses, close and long shots, and conflicts of depths, light and darkness (Eisenstein, 1949: 38-39 in Bizzocchi, 2009: 4). Bizzocchi goes on to suggest how split screen montage provides “increased narrative bandwidth” (2009: 16). This motif has strong theoretical resonance as the split screen suggests narrative complexity which helps to break down the notional singularities of state and ‘community’ to reveal multiple actors and complex interactions playing out simultaneously within and between parallel windows that continually subdivide to reveal hidden players, and introduce new contestations and mutual accommodations which are the signifiers of their rationalities.

### **3.8. Methodological approach**

As discussed in Chapter 2, ‘rationality’ is an elusive concept embedded in discourse and action which fleetingly reveals itself. The methodological approach discussed in this chapter sets out to interweave the theoretical and the methodological threads into a net fine enough to capture the discourse markers of these diverse rationalities

and enable their coding so that trends, connections, continuities, discontinuities and contradictions can be collated, mapped and analysed.

Attempts to explore, compare and contrast rationalities present a serious methodological challenge which is not easily addressed using conventional semi-structured interview techniques. Rationalities are shy to reveal themselves, particularly in settings characterised by deep difference, and may resist disclosure through direct and standardised questioning. The methodological proposition guiding the research design is that the characteristics and contours of divergent rationalities are more likely to be discovered in the analysis of discourse, and emerge from narratives originating in lightly scripted conversations. The ways in which people in diverse settings construct and recount stories, how they script these and choose what to put in or leave out, are framed by their way of seeing and their view on the world. This organises their way of making sense of what they encounter, which is in turn an expression of their rationality.

This need for a light touch led to the search for a methodology which would elicit narratives from a range of different actors – one which would largely avoid direct questioning and instead enable conversations of the kind envisaged by Field and Swanson:

*If you are trying to understand how and why people believe what they believe, think what they think, and – most crucially – why people act in the ways that they do, then memories and oral narratives or texts are of vital research significance.*

(Field and Swanson, 2007: 9)

These conversations were grounded in actor experiences and perceptions of the case. They included those directly affected and involved – people living in the informal settlement, the TRA, the Phase 1 rental flats in Joe Slovo Park, the show houses and

the newly constructed units in Phase 3, together with agents within the state responsible for aspects of the N2 Gateway planning and implementation. They also included those indirectly affected by the project – people living in other localities within Langa and a mix of local and other external actors seeking to influence its outcome. The interviews followed different conversational routes – some direct and as well signposted as highways, others following less defined and exploratory narrative tracks and footpaths. Whether direct or indirect, the conversations with diverse actors were guided by the core research questions.

### **3.9. Utilising image-led narrative interview methodology**

The bulk of the interviews were conducted drawing on an image-led narrative methodology which provided the scaffolding for semi-structured interviews with a wide range of actors in Langa and beyond in the state and civil society. All interviews were prefaced by the researcher providing background on the aims of the research study, securing permission to conduct and record the interview and determining conditions of anonymity and attribution consistent with the stipulations of UCT's research ethics guidelines.

#### **3.9.1 Methodological antecedents**

The methodology emerges out of reflection on the diverse literature on the photographic medium and the uses of photos/photography in social research. Some of the impetus for this initiative was derived from the 'visual turn' associated with the work of Berger and Mohr (1975), who set out to narrate the departure, arrival and return of male migrants from southern Europe to service the advanced capitalist economies of north-western Europe. In a subsequent work the authors provided the following rationale for visual as means to apprehend elusive meanings:



*In themselves appearances are ambiguous, with multiple meanings. This is why the visual is astonishing and why memory, based upon the visual, is freer than reason.*

(Berger and Mohr, 1982: 133)

These stories attach themselves to the inherent ambiguity that is contained within a photograph has the potential to provide “a unique means of expression” and which may “suggest another way of telling”(1982: 92). The visual turn is also integral to the emergence of participatory research methods and the emphasis on mapping, modelling and diagramming employed as part of RRA, PRA and PLA methods (Chambers, 1983; Chambers, 1994; Pretty et al., 1995; Slocum et al., 1998; Chambers, 2007; Chambers, 2008).

### **3.9.2 Photo elicitation methods**

Within anthropological and sociological research (Collier, 1957; Collier and Collier, 1986) and more recently in oral history (Freund and Thomson, 2011; Field, 2012) there is a growing literature which reflects on the use of photography and reviews the potentials and pitfalls of visual methods. Harper, a leading advocate of visual sociology and photo elicitation methods, traces the history of visual methods and the various ways in which photographs can be used in the research process asserting that:

*A photograph, a literal rendering of an element of the subject's world, calls forth associations, definitions or ideas that would otherwise go unnoticed.*

(Harper, 1988: 65)

It is this element that has the potential to generate insights into the underlying rationalities of the subject – how images provide the impetus for stories which script positions and perspectives, and reveal that which is important. Harper highlights the

power of photo elicitation to add depth to the interview process and open up topics which the researcher would not otherwise anticipate.

*I believe photo elicitation mines deeper shafts into a different part of human consciousness than do words alone in interviews... That extraordinary sense of seeming to retrieve something that has disappeared belongs alone to the photograph and it leads to deep and interesting talk.*

(Harper, 2002: 23)

### **3.9.3 The narrative sequence**

Methodologically the approach to image-led narrative, which was employed for almost all interviews in the present research, typically followed a three-phase process with all informants, irrespective of their background and location. This involved conversation linked to three sets of images:

- an A3 Google Earth image of Langa as a whole;
- a set of year-on-year Google Earth images showing change in Langa, drawn from the historical imagery slider in Google Earth spanning the period 2000–2010;
- a collection of found images depicting aspects of life in Langa as a basis for conversation consistent with the methodological approach outlined above.

(See Appendix 1 for details).

The orientation map provided an overview of Langa as a whole, while the ten-year spatial chronology depicted by the satellite images was designed to provide a frame for the principle period of the research enquiry while allowing discussion of what preceded and followed the aerial sequence. This initial conversation also provided spatial references and cues for the identification and discussion of related events identified by the informants. The photographic images discussed in the third phase of the interview provided prompts to initiate open-ended and cross-cutting issue-led

discussion and associated storytelling. Irrespective of the different ways in which informants responded to images, the methodology provided a broad platform and multiple entry points which facilitated the gathering of explanatory and reflexive narratives. These provided insights and ‘thick description’ into different perspectives and associated actor rationalities, as will be revealed in Chapter 5 where the research findings are presented.

### **3.10. Language and meaning – shifting boundaries**

Language marks out the border between territories of meaning – territories that are more accessible and immediate when language is shared, but which are more distant, remote and difficult to penetrate in the context of cross-language communication and research. Liu (1999) observes how language and the colonial encounter have failed to substantively redraw the contours of Western thinking. Cross-lingual transfers of meaning are heavily taxed and filtered, requiring linguistic and cultural transaction brokers who consciously or inadvertently regulate the exchange between researcher and informant in a skewed “economy of meaning-value and (often unequal forms of) transcultural exchange” (Liu, 1999: 2)

Crucially in the context of this research enquiry, language is the primary vehicle for the articulation and expression of underlying rationality. In South Africa English is the dominant language of policy, planning and legal proceedings. Each of these domains has its own specialised vocabulary and particular register. Bureaucratic and technical rationality emerges through the texts and speech acts which shape the discourses associated with the ‘will to govern and improve’. Entry into these domains and interpretation of associated discourses is restricted to those who have acquired fluency in this specialised language. In one sense this can be considered as a marker of power, but it may also be regarded as a potent marker of isolation as the overwhelming majority of first-language English and Afrikaans policy makers,

bureaucrats, technicians and researchers are unable to enter unguided into the realms for which they are responsible or seek to understand. Xhosa is needed to navigate the townships independently, and to interpret the micro-geographies of hostels and informal settlements that primarily accommodate rural migrants and which are the territories of the urban poor. In an enquiry which seeks to identify and map the elusive interplay of rationalities, language is a critical filter which may impact significantly on the credibility of the findings or skew analysis by enabling a more thorough and intuitive reading of informants who speak the same language as the interviewer.

I conducted all interviews personally, supported by a research assistant for 'translation' in settings where the first language of the informant was Xhosa and where my social network or ability to navigate a particular space unguided was inadequate. Having lived and worked for several years in Herschel – a linguistically diverse rural area in the Eastern Cape with Hlubi, Thembu and Batlokwa Sotho speakers – I had acquired a reasonable basic proficiency in Xhosa, albeit with a Hlubi inflection, better in understanding than in conversation, but lacking the requisite depth to confidently conduct and interpret interviews independently without an interlocutor. My location on the margins of multilingual exchange amplified my sense of constraint and magnified the barrier to the apprehension of subtly encoded meanings. This prompted particular interventions post-interview to try to address this limitation.

The fact that all three research assistants were men also presented complex and hard-to-read dynamics in relation to informants, particularly in the hostel and informal settlement settings where having a male assistant presented both advantages and disadvantages. While it may have provided reassurance and opened space for the engagement of male informants, it may also have filtered and acted as a constraint on certain, but certainly not all, of the female voices. In these two settings

gender and age relations were in transition. While the historical dominance of men's voices remained a strong social feature, it was clear that this was also the subject of challenge. Consequently each interview became the site of an elaborate encounter during which there was a mutual informal and race-gender-insider/outsider-mediated probing between the researcher, the research assistant and the informant which provided subtle cues that either established or constrained the basis for a conversation, and impacted on the extent to which male and female informants felt comfortable telling their stories.

### **3.10.1 The politics of meaning and the practice of interpretation**

The thirty-six cross-language interviews conducted in different settings within Langa with male and female informants of varying ages presented challenging issues in the forward and backward rendition of conversation, questions and answers between English and Xhosa. All interviews were digitally recorded. All informants gave permission to record the interview; although there were some who requested that the recorder be switched off at certain points in the conversation.

It became clear in the cross-language interviews that the research assistants could not single-handedly apprehend the informants' meanings and render these back into English for the researcher to subsequently transcribe. In some instances informants who had a good understanding of English intervened to correct the interpretation of what they had said. However this meant that informants with little English were powerless to address distortions and were reliant on my knowledge of Xhosa to hear how, in certain instances, the research assistant was improvising upon and embellishing an informant's words, adding elements which he saw as consistent with the thread of their response but which were not what they had actually said. My reflection as a researcher in dual-language settings is that this is probably more

the norm than the exception, and forms part of the key silence about language and translation (Pillay, 2009) discussed in Chapter 2.

### 3.10.2 Dual translation

The fugitive nature of meaning in multilingual interviews necessitated a range of post-interview cross-checking and dual translation, which took different forms. The most comprehensive intervention involved a complete multilingual transcription and translation of the interviews. In the example below the text in black is from the first transcription, which captured the English threads of the conversation only. The texts in red and blue were added by a second translator/transcriber. This graphically highlights how in the process of translating the research assistant has both omitted and added information to what the informant originally said. In the course of the conversation the research assistant has also added his own questions. In conventional research settings the English-speaking interviewer often remains in the dark about the interchange s/he hears but cannot decipher.

Inf: EDelft, gqitha. Ndikhumbula ndandisaphangela ngelo xesha, ndiphangela e-Epping. Kwakunzima itransport. Yitransport iproblem qha pha. But kona kwakungekubanga ukuhlala but kwakubanda. Kwakubanda because iitemporal if kuyabanda kuyabanda if kushushu kushushu qha ke, and ke ngoku ndabe ndiqonda ke ngoku istress sam ndinomntwana omncinci ngela xesha.

In Delft<sup>11</sup> it was very difficult. I remember I was working at that time, I was working in Epping. Transport was the problem. The only problem was

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<sup>11</sup> The informant had been displaced to the TRA in Delft after a fire, but had since returned to Langa where he had been allocated one of the 'show houses' in Phase 3 of the N2 Gateway.

transport, but life was fine besides cold. It was cold there because in the temporaries if it is cold they are cold and if it is hot they are hot, and now my stress was the fact that I had a small child then.

Ass: And utshatile.

And you are married.

Inf: Nditshatile mna

I am married.

Ass: Yes, he was facing a problem around the temporary in Delft – the reason why is in that temporary when [it] is hot it's hot, when it is cold it's cold. Then, yes, temporary was a nice place because you have taps, you have water, you have access to the electricity. But the problem is that there was no transport at all; it was a struggle for them to come [sic] as he was looking jobs around Epping. It was a struggle for him.

Int: Okay.

**Figure 3: Example of full dual-language transcription and interpretation**

The provision of the original Xhosa transcript increases the transparency of the research conversation and reveals the process of adding and subtracting meanings. Ideally this transcript should be checked a second time by a second bilingual reviewer. This suggests that the above approach should be the 'gold standard' for cross-language qualitative research.

The issues illustrated by the passage above clearly raise major questions about the whole process of cross-lingual research and the trustworthiness and credibility of multilingual transcriptions. As a result, the majority of the cross-language interviews were submitted for checking and independent translation of the informant's Xhosa

narrative, although full dual-language transcription as in the example above was not affordable.

As Liu (1999) cautions above, translation and the transfer of meaning are far more fundamental concerns than a technical problem to be solved. Overall the research process has highlighted the paucity of in-depth reflection on cross-language research, and crucial silences in the research process which do not properly acknowledge the complex dynamics at play and the ease with which English 'translation' is quickly rendered unfaithful to the essence of what the respondent may have meant originally, trapping it in a crude approximation and summative shorthand. Cross-language interviews highlight the potential for the clash of rationalities underpinning the 'will to govern and improve' and the 'will to survive and thrive' to be further amplified by the partial nature of mutual understanding, and the particular "cultural economies of meaning" underpinning actor encounters across multilingual settings "which are, at the same time, historical economies of power" (Pfohl and Van Wagenen, 2006: 2).

### **3.11. Primary research: The narrative harvest**

Sixty-seven interviews were conducted over a three-year period commencing in June 2010, yielding around 450 000 words of transcript as the basis for coding and analysis (See Appendix 4). Sampling was purposive and actor-focused, informed directly by the conceptual framework with an element of random selection in particular settings. Two broad clusters of narratives were assembled, transcribed verbatim, coded and analysed – those which are located within the state/ trustee axis and those which explore the diverse voices and social spaces within Langa. The process of selection and sampling is discussed in more detail below, together with an analysis of some of the shortcomings in the scope and breadth of interviews conducted and a description of measures to ensure triangulation of data and sources.



### 3.11.1 State and ‘trustee’ narratives

This cluster combines the narratives which arise from the interviews with a purposive sample of selected political and technical actors within, or closely associated with the local, provincial and national spheres of state with responsibility for planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway. These narratives are also augmented by the documents these actors produce. The actors include officials from the Provincial Department of Human Settlements and officials from the Departments of Informal Settlements Management and Anti-Land Invasion and Disaster Management within the City of Cape Town (CCT), together with elected councillors from Langa past and present and N2 Gateway project managers employed by Thubelisha Homes and the Housing Development Agency associated with the National Departments of Housing and Human Settlements<sup>12</sup> (see Table 1). Interviews with officials were augmented by interviews with NGO actors and other external formations associated with informal settlement upgrading, preventing evictions or promoting social organisation in Langa and Joe Slovo – the majority of whom could be described as ‘trustees’ using Li’s formulation discussed above.

**Table 1: The breakdown of interviews with state actors and associated ‘trustees’**

<b>State/‘trustee’ narratives</b>	<b>Number</b>
State	10
N2G Project Management	2
Langa councillors	2
Civil society	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>

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<sup>12</sup> The name of the Department of Housing was changed to the Department of Human Settlements in 2009.

The reticence of some actors within the state to be interviewed as a consequence of the high political profile and negative publicity associated with the N2 Gateway required the compilation of comprehensive documentation to provide a further base of evidence for analysis. In this regard the court action relating to the eviction of the Joe Slovo residents, the investigation of Phase 1 of the project by members of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Housing, and the forensic audit commissioned by the Auditor-General provided a research bonus as a wide range of documents came into the public domain. This contributed to a solid collection of source materials including plans, presentations, minutes of meetings and project progress reports, terms of reference, court papers and supporting documents, commissioned specialist reports, parliamentary questions, ministerial memos, press statements, publicity and communications materials, transcripts of speeches and numerous official press statements issued by different spheres of government. These documents have been closely scrutinised and many coded to analyse the narratives of officials and political representatives which emerge from these sources.

Informant interviews were frequently extensive and candid, with informants raising issues and perspectives which ordinarily might be considered to be 'off the record'. This has meant that identities have been protected throughout the research study, even where informants gave permission to be identified and have their words attributed. This protection of identities is also done in recognition of the long delay between conducting an interview and reference to it in a PhD research thesis which only becomes publicly available several years later. In the interim conditions may have changed substantially within the institutional contexts where informants continue to work, and the researcher has an obligation not to place his sources at risk because of views they may have expressed in the past.

### 3.11.2 Langa resident narratives

Imposing boundaries on the scope of research and restricting the pool of informants presented challenges for the study which is ongoing and has gone through several phases. Figure 4 below shows the N2 Gateway in the broader context of Langa.

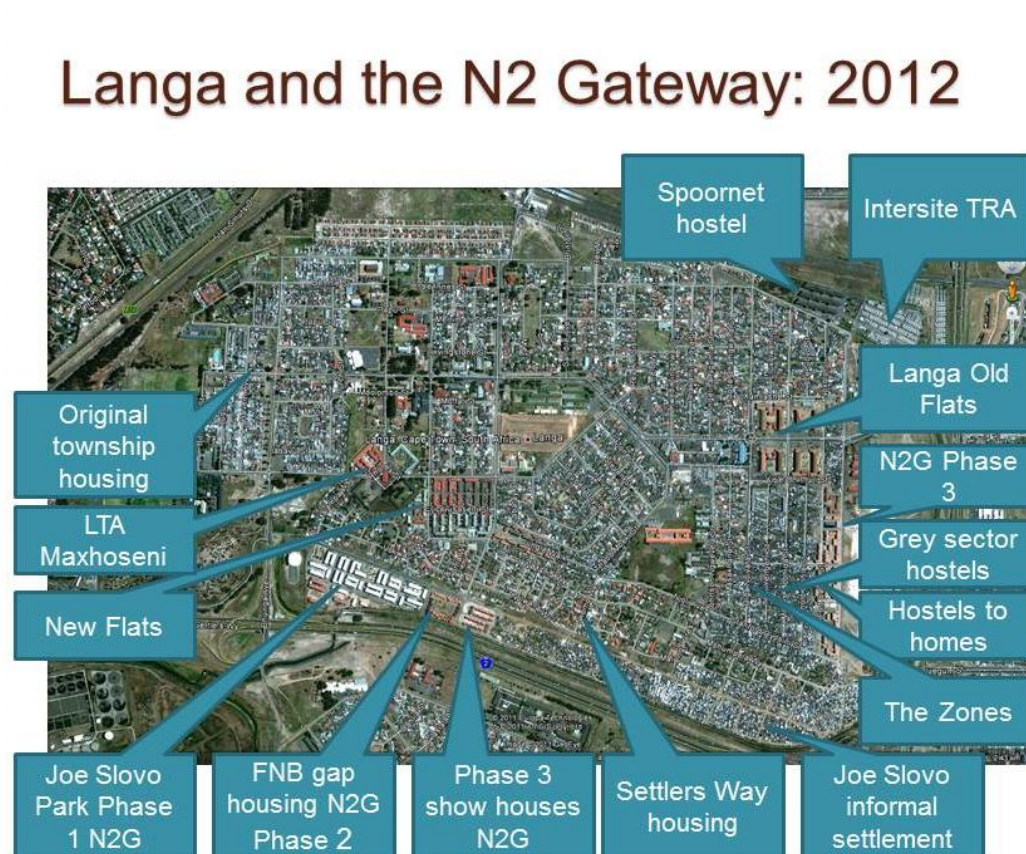


Figure 4: The N2 Gateway in the context of Langa: Base satellite image from Google Earth

Initial scoping interviews suggested that displaced people not qualifying for units in terms of the hostels redevelopment programme were being partly absorbed by relocation to the informal settlement or construction of shacks in the hostel precincts. This, coupled with mounting controversy over allocation policy for the N2 Gateway and the exclusion of Langa backyarders, suggested that the focus of the research needed to be on both Joe Slovo informal settlement and Langa more broadly. Given this focus, the second narrative cluster brings together stories from the diverse actors

located within Langa township. Table 2 below provides a breakdown of these interviews which draw in the voices of residents located in widely differing settings. The residents chosen to be interviewed reflected a combination of purposive sampling combined with elements of random selection within certain categories.

The purposive sampling sought to identify and hear the voices and stories of people from across the Cape border and *amagoduka* social strata with differing claims to different space and place and senses of urban belonging. However it must be emphasised that in no way should these voices be regarded as somehow 'representative' of a particular social category. Likewise any inferences which propose links between spatial setting and social category should also be regarded with extreme circumspection. The Langa interviews sought to locate people primarily by their attachments to space and place – particular domains of Langa sociality – in order to hear and compare stories which emerged. In certain of those spaces there was an impetus to seek out 'key informants', not because they would somehow condense 'the truth' about life in particular Langa precincts and resident rationalities, but because of their storytelling capabilities based on their experiences as long-time residents in a particular space or local organisation. This guided informant selection within Settlers and with Langa backyarders. In other spaces like the municipal and grey<sup>13</sup> hostel precincts –and the informal settlement, the approach was to conduct more of a random sampling through the singling out of a set of hostel buildings from the aerial photo and then negotiating access through whatever formal or informal political structures were recognised to assert claims on that space, prior to walking around and knocking on doors. In certain instances such as the N2

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<sup>13</sup> Grey hostels originally housed migrant workers employed by particular private companies or state bodies such as South African Railways/Spoornet. Companies were responsible for the management of these facilities which they constructed on land leased from the City of Cape Town but many abandoned the hostels in the mid-1980s.

Gateway flats, where nominal political or local representative structures were resistant to permitting outsider research access, the social networks of research assistants and other contacts helped establish connections with people willing to talk who were living within that space. In the informal settlement the selection process was loosely based on a transect – a ‘wandering about’ along the axis of a predetermined trajectory to engage in conversation and interviews with those willing to talk and share their stories.

**Table 2: The breakdown of Langa-based interviews**

<b>Langa actors</b>	<b>Number</b>
Backyarders Association <sup>14</sup>	1
Hostels (state and ‘grey’)	9
Settlers Way bonded housing	2
N2 Gateway show houses	3
N2 Gateway Joe Slovo Park flats	2
Joe Slovo informal settlement	21
N2 Gateway Phase 3	3
Intersite TRA	4
Langa General	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>

### **3.12. Combined interview breakdown**

A visual representation of the interviews conducted is presented in Figure 5 below.

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<sup>14</sup> Langa backyarders have established an Association to advocate their needs. A focus group interview was held with the leadership and some members of the Association.

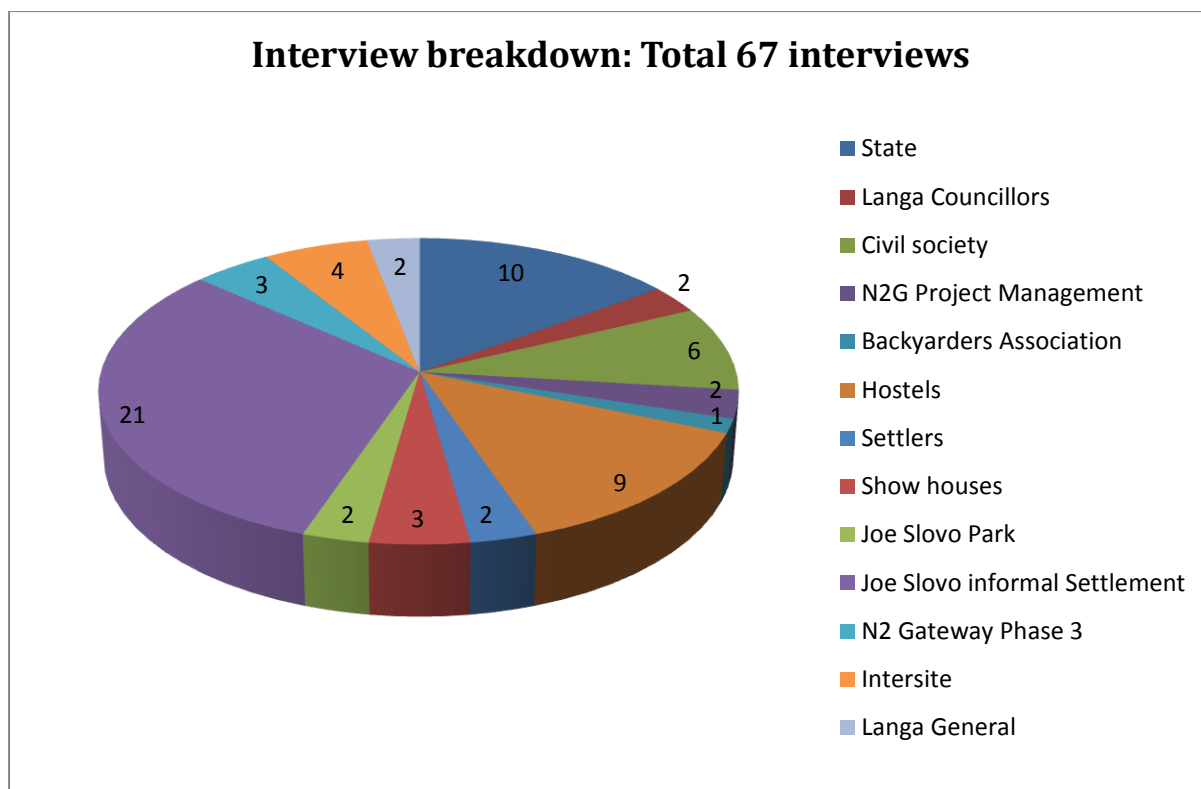


Figure 5: Combined distribution of interviews conducted to research the case study

### 3.13. Processes to ensure research validity and reliability

Whittemore et al. (2001: 527) highlight the view that “qualitative research seeks depth over breadth... it is contextual and subjective versus generalizable and objective”. They examine the stark contrast between post-positivism and interpretive enquiry “in terms of ontology, epistemology and methodology” and the intense debate which continues over the nature of validity criteria in the qualitative research arena

It is important to recognise this history of ambivalence, given Yin’s confident identification of four dimensions of validity relevant to assessment of the quality and rigour of case study research that he argues are central to the validity of the research and the reliability of the data. They are reproduced in Table 3 below, and discussed

in the following sections in relation to the research and data analysis methodology employed in the study.

**Table 3: Case design tactics to ensure validity and reliability (Yin, 2009: loc 1078)**

TESTS	Case study tactic	Phase of research in which tactic occurs
Construct validity	Use multiple sources of evidence Establish chain of evidence Have key informants review draft case study report	Data collection Data collection Composition
Internal validity	Do pattern matching Do explanation building Address rival explanations Use logic models	Data analysis Data analysis Data analysis Data analysis
External validity	Use theory in single case studies	Research design
Reliability	Use case study protocol Develop case database	Data collection Data collection

### **3.13.1 Construct validity**

Whittemore et al. (2001) acknowledge Sandelowski's premise (1993: 1) that "evocative, true to life, meaningful portraits, stories and landscapes of human experience" are at the heart of qualitative research. This study is closely aligned with Sandelowski's approach, in that it seeks to develop research methods which privilege the generation of narrative and have the potential to open up the discursive space for people to claim the centre of the interview stage, to craft their own stories and cut free from some of the strictures imposed by more conventional interview methods. But it is also crucial to recognise the possibility that "qualitative research findings can be interesting, illuminating and erroneous" in the sense that

“interpretations may be unsubstantiated and reflective only of researcher bias” (Miles and Huberman, 1994 in Whitemore et al., 2001: 526) .

Yin’s approach to case study design and data analysis seeks to contain that bias within the design, data collection and analysis phases. Yin advises that in the data collection phase there should be a careful focus on identifying multiple sources of evidence to ensure “construct validity” which he defines as “identifying correct operational measures for the concepts being studied” (2009: Loc. 1078). The varied sources of evidence utilised in this case study and the richness and depth of their content helps to construct an unusually strong evidentiary chain. While Yin advises that key informants should review the case report to check for errors and misunderstandings, the contested and politicised nature of this case and the divergent rationalities and agendas of those involved, raises questions about the value of such a process, and the premise that somehow there is a consensual reading of the events which could be discovered.

Overall the approach to the case in this regard follows Burawoy (1998), who argues that while the researcher has to take exceptional care to ensure the rigour of the investigation, ultimately this cannot insulate us from the contested world we study or the consequences which may flow from our interpretation and analysis of data – an assertion which seems valid within either a structuralist or post-structuralist approach to case research. In this instance it is argued that the breadth of evidence, the thematic saturation of the data and the multiplicity of sources available for cross-checking the key elements are sufficient to permit the overlooking of this step proposed by Yin.

### **3.13.2 Internal validity**

Yin specifies processes of pattern matching, explanation building and logic modelling deployed as part of data analysis to ensure internal validity. These



processes are premised on the careful coding of data to identify themes, make connections and triangulate between sources. In this study qualitative data analysis (QDA) software a NVivo was deployed to assist with the management, coding and preliminary analysis of themes and issues emerging from the data. Coding is a key component of qualitative research and is an essential sense- and meaning-making activity, particularly when beginning to engage with large amounts of unstructured raw data. "Coding has a crucial role in the analyses of such data to organize and make sense of them" (Bosit, 2003: 152). The coding process developed for analysing interview transcripts and secondary data sources has involved extensive reading and rereading of the texts and the adoption of an evolutionary approach to the design of the coding system. Overall this recognises that coding is an iterative process which involves at least two, and as many as three or four cycles. It is clear from the experience of working with QDA software that there remains no substitute for paying close attention to the full transcripts of interviews by making them the subjects of repeated reading and independent note-taking in order to avoid being swamped by swarms of mechanically connected and sometimes trivial particularities.

### **3.13.3 External validity**

As noted and discussed extensively above, there is no generalisation which can be made from a single case except to theory. Chapter 2 has articulated the conceptual framework to situate the research questions, and the analysis of the findings which follows will reflect on and propose modifications to the theory framing the case.

### **3.13.4 Reliability**

Yin identifies the need for a case study protocol, noting that "the general way of approaching the reliability problem is to make as many steps as operational as possible and to conduct research as if someone was always looking over your

shoulder". He states further that "research should be conducted so that an auditor could in principle repeat the procedures and arrive at the same results" (Yin, 2009: loc 1172). It is in this domain that it is difficult to escape attributing to Yin what appears to be a preoccupation stemming from a post-positivist quantitative research paradigm, with its insistence on standardisation and consistency which are deemed necessary for his bid to inject the necessary rigour into case research.

While the notion of being constantly observed in the act of planning and documenting the research process is useful in promoting an auto-reflexivity, and helps to ensure the systematic construction of the case database in order to compile, organise and cross reference all the data relevant to the case, the terrain of the actual research encounter is something fundamentally different. It forms part of a subtle, constantly mutating performative space and relationship. The construction of this space depends on multiple variables which align or misalign depending on the day and the circumstances. It is a space which must incorporate multilingual misunderstandings, different cultural registers, deeply embedded dynamics of power and difference, gender, youth, relative age and race. It must traverse contexts of informality on the one hand and norms of bureaucracy on the other – polar spaces inhabited by social actors from diverse backgrounds who are frequently angry or frustrated and who may start off by displaying hostility and suspicion. The telling of their story is in part, dependent on the offering and timing of miniscule reassurances and subtle cues. These can build (or break) the necessary rapport that has to be established by the researcher, (sometimes in tandem with an assistant – inserting a new set of entanglements), through particular combinations of respectful attitude, humour, self-deprecation and deep listening. It is contended that many of these 'things unseen' will be beyond the repertoire of Yin's presumed auditor and their capability to repeat the results. It is this combination of elusive qualities and registers which marks the boundary line between qualitative and quantitative

research paradigms, and which injects the unsettling mix of elements that continues to make the reliability of qualitative research hard to measure and determine.

### **3.14. Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a reflection on the inherent strangeness associated with qualitative enquiry. It has provided the rationale for the use of the case method and located this within broader debates and contestations about qualitative and quantitative research paradigms and their associated positivist and post-structural interpretivist knowledge theories. It has examined how retroductive case study research originates in and generalises back to theory.

It has advanced the arguments for the selection of the N2 Gateway as a 'critical' and 'paradigmatic' case. It has proposed the motif of the 'split screen' to visualise the repeated break-up of the social and spatial framing of the case to reveal multiple frames inside the frame, representative of the multilateral encounters between the 'will to govern and improve' of actors in the state and the 'will to survive and thrive' of actors in Langa.

The chapter has set out the methodological approach for the generation of image-led narrative technique and examined its origins in photo elicitation research methods. It has foregrounded the critical dynamics shaping the relationships between the researcher, the research assistant, the translator and finesser of language and the informants. It has explored how these dynamics influenced the ways in which cross-lingual stories were told and heard. It has examined the many ways in which meaning can be suppressed or inserted in translation, and has identified the necessity of transcript reviews by a third party to improve reliability and better apprehend meaning and nuance which otherwise might be distorted or overlooked.

The chapter has outlined the combination of purposive and random transect or place-based informant sampling used in the study in a bid to draw on diverse

sources and obtain multiple narratives about the case, and has provided a breakdown of the interviews conducted. It has set out the processes used to collate and code the diverse evidentiary sources forming the case data set, and reflected on the process of using NVivo to code data.

The chapter has concluded with a reflexive appraisal of the research process as a whole, summarising particular methodological issues and challenges that were presented and how these were addressed, and the methods employed to ensure the validity and reliability of the research process and its findings.

# **Chapter 4**

## **N2 GATEWAY CASE AND POLICY CONTEXT**

### **4.1. Introduction**

Chapter 4 summarises the recent history of Langa from the transition to democracy in the early 1990s and with it the rapid flowering of informality from seeds planted deep in the histories of the particular distortions of South African rural and urban political economy. It tracks the growth of the Joe Slovo informal settlement in the early 1990s and its subsequent changing representations within the new development discourse and practices of the democratic era.

Additional materials are available in Appendix 2 which sets out the earlier history of Langa and tracks key phases in the development of the township since its inception in the 1920s. This provides insights into how the evolution of migrant labour and the changing nature of rural-urban linkages have shaped the dynamics of urbanisation and impacted on the contemporary rationalities of township social actors in contested urban space. Appendix 3 provides more contemporary information setting out a chronology of relevant events in Langa for the twenty year period prior 1992 - 2012.

This chapter provides insights into the emergence of post-apartheid housing policy and isolates key shifts in policy responses to informality amongst actors within the state. It reviews the contemporary social and policy context to provide insight into the enduring fissures within the complex social edifice of Langa and the ways in which these shape and reflect rationalities, inform contestations over space, and point to the strategies of struggle of different actors in response to the planning and implementation of different phases of the N2 Gateway project.

The chapter provides the foundation for the detailed exposition of the research findings in Chapter 5, organised in terms of the narrative arc suggested by the conceptual framework, and the subsequent analysis of their theoretical significance in Chapters 6 and 7.

## **4.2. South Africa and Langa in the transition**

The late 1980s and early 1990s marked an intense period of transition both globally and nationally. Internationally the 1990s marked the emergence of a new geopolitical order, characterised by the globalisation of capital, following the collapse of the Eastern bloc with the symbolic fall of the Berlin wall in 1989. In the early 1990s South Africa was marked by a heady mix of expectation, contestation and confusion as different actors and social forces vied to shape new policies, legislation and institutions. The objectives of a new development thrust were set out in the RDP, which had originated in the union movement and had originally envisaged a more radical programme of transformation. However this vision was overwhelmed and diluted by the prevailing politics of consensus which saw the promotion of the RDP as “a unifying, national endeavour that allegedly transcended parochial interests” (Marais, 1998: 177). Both the land and the housing goals – which included the redistribution of 30% of agricultural land in five years and the building of a million low cost homes by 2000 – were criticised for lack of realism. Freund memorably characterised the RDP as “an impressive catalogue of dilemmas” littered with simplistic references to “the community” asking where “the armies of highly skilled and devoted planners” were to come from and whether “South Africans want or even tolerate a new set of social engineers (even men and women with the best of intentions) to put all the gears into reverse” (1994: 36).

### 4.2.1 The development of new housing policy

The development of new housing policy during the 1990s was influenced by the long history of private sector and state interventions in the housing sector. Corporations in the private sector had launched the Urban Foundation in 1977 in response to the mounting urban crisis. Its early statements of intent leave no doubt as to its original motivation to create an urban home-owning class:

*Only by having this most responsible section of the urban black population on our side can the whites be assured of containing on a long-term basis the irresponsible economic and political ambitions of those blacks who are influenced against their own real interests from within and without our borders.*

(Davies, 1984: 123).

Since the 1970s the apartheid state had been involved in a range of initiatives which aimed to provide a political buffer in the urban areas through the creation of a home-owning black middle class. State initiatives included the introduction of a ninety-nine year leasehold scheme in 1977, attempts to mobilise private sector support for the 'black housing process' in line with recommendations contained within the report of the Viljoen Commission in 1982, attempts to ensure 'orderly urbanisation' on the urban periphery contained within the President's Council urbanisation strategy, combined with a scheme to sell off some 500,000 state-owned houses to tenants with Section 10 rights<sup>15</sup> which was launched in 1983, when banks were also encouraged to enter the low-income housing market. The 1980s saw the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983 and the Congress of South African trade

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<sup>15</sup> Section 10 Rights of the Native Laws Amendment Act (No. 54 of 1952) specified stringent criteria defining those Africans who were entitled to live permanently in the urban areas and defining all others as "temporary sojourners" in the city.

Unions (COSATU) in 1985, and the launch of the period of ungovernability which precipitated the collapse of this drive to promote homeownership in the face of prolonged rent, service and bond boycotts.

Huchzermeyer (2001) traces the process of housing policy negotiation through the establishment of the National Housing Forum in 1993, in which it was envisaged that the state would play a facilitating and enabling role through the provision of capital subsidies to allow the private sector and community-based organisations to deliver housing and shelter (Charlton and Kihato, 2006). The 1994 Housing White Paper anticipated the right of South African citizens to have access to adequate housing that would be written into the final Constitution in 1996. It set out government's commitment to provide "a permanent residential structure" and enable delivery of one million houses in five years which Khan characterises as the product of a "technocratic rationality allied to the 'policy analytic'/ 'policy rhetoric' turn of the transition era" (2010: 40).

#### **4.2.2 Emerging critique of housing policy and practice**

Over time a substantive critique of housing policy and practice developed (Bond and Tait, 1997; Blake, 2000; Isandla Institute, 2001; Bond, 2003; Huchzermeyer, 2003) which identified the limitations of the 'width versus depth' and 'market-centred' approaches. These were seen as extensions of prior policies of the Urban Foundation and the Independent Development Trust<sup>16</sup> which had failed to challenge the fundamentals of the apartheid city. At the same time critics found it hard to resist highlighting the initial quantitative shortcomings in the housing delivery programme, citing the slow rate of subsidy disbursement and housing construction. It was these criticisms about programme performance, rather than those focused on

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<sup>16</sup> The IDT was established in 1990 with a R2bn government endowment grant to be invested and the returns used to fund development initiatives in poor communities including site and service schemes.



policy fundamentals, to which government chose to respond, and which spurred its attempts to speed up delivery and improve the numbers.

There is a long history of such attempts to accelerate delivery. A number of constraints had been identified as early as 1996 by a national Ministerial Task Team. In purely quantitative terms these measures to address ‘delivery bottlenecks’ met with significant success in that the government was able to deliver its first million houses – each comprising a 30 m<sup>2</sup> unit on a 250 m<sup>2</sup> plot of land – within seven years, which as Rust (2006) has observed was a rate of delivery which remains “unparalleled internationally”. Turok (2011) confirms that in the period 1994–2009 government built 2.8 million houses for almost 11 million people at a rate four times the level of private sector house construction in the same period. However despite this progress, 1.9 million people remained in informal dwellings, of whom 0.6 million were living in backyard shacks.

#### **4.2.3 Cue the N2 Gateway**

The conceptual genesis of the N2 Gateway megaproject can be traced back to the report of the 1996 Ministerial Task Team which proposed measures to create special programmes to promote large-scale projects and joint-venture partnerships between public and private sectors. This provided the stimulus for government to embrace megaprojects as a mechanism for delivery at scale. This approach also found support through the Presidential Jobs Summit Pilot Project on Housing in 1998, which announced a pilot project that aimed to deliver “50,000 housing units in ten projects across the country by December 2000” (Huchzermeyer, 2001: 316).

These initiatives can be regarded as the precursor to the N2 Gateway, which in Phase 1 would pilot rental social housing. The N2 Gateway was spurred by a mounting intolerance within the state towards the continued growth of informal settlements, exemplified by Minister Sisulu’s declaration of war on shacks in her 2004 budget

speech (Department of Housing, 2004c) and her ambitious but futile pledge to eradicate them by 2014. An added contemporary spur was the impetus towards “beautification” of Cape Town ahead of the 2010 FIFA World Cup (Newton, 2009).

#### **4.2.4 Contested perspectives on informality**

While ANC political leadership signalled opposition to informality there was now a growing recognition in academic literature of the urbanisation of poverty (Parnell and Mabin, 1995; Parnell, 1997; Beall and Kanji, 1999; Atkinson and Marais, 2006) and the place of informality in the city (Khan and Pieterse, 2004; Simone, 2004; Cross, 2006; Huchzermeyer and Karam, 2006) and its role in the livelihood strategies of the migrant and urban poor (Simone, 2001; Lund and Skinner, 2004). This literature also examines the “ways in which ordinary people are re-using and remaking urban space at a rapid rate” (Robinson, 2004: 173). Huchzermeyer’s critique (2001) of the Minister’s hostility to the informal highlighted the failure of the state to understand the importance of mobility for the poor and the marginal. This critique has been echoed by Turok’s (2011) more contemporary concerns about the dangers of “a prescriptive top down model of ‘delivering’ housing and services” and the associated risk of “providing inappropriate, inflexible or unaffordable facilities” who follows Robson et al. (2008) and Cross (2010) in observing that:

*A policy of slum eradication or replacement by formal housing in these areas is unhelpful, as most of those affected would probably not qualify for state housing, and they would in any case struggle to afford the accompanying running costs of electricity and water charges. Also unable to afford to rent upgraded housing, they would be displaced by better-off households and forced to move to the cheapest shack areas on the periphery.*

(Turok, 2011: 69)

### **4.3. The N2 Gateway – a story in five episodes**

Study of the N2 Gateway, its different accounts and related source materials which are presented in Chapter 5 suggests useful ways to periodise the project into five episodes. Appendix 3 contains more detail on each of the five episodes summarised below.

#### **4.3.1 Episode 1: The rise of informality in Langa**

Episode 1 covers the period from the origins of Joe Slovo in the early 1990s to the fire of 2000 and the state's immediate responses to this disaster. This period sees initial attempts by the state to prevent the development of the settlement and then subsequently to ignore its growth. The settlement gained national prominence with the 2000 fire which was declared a national disaster which prompted investment in blocking out, basic services and tracks. Despite attempts to control the growth in the settlement it continued to expand rapidly which culminated in the 2005 fire and Episode 2.

#### **4.3.2 Episode 2: The launch of BNG and the N2 Gateway**

This episode sees the public launch of the N2 Gateway as a joint initiative of three spheres of government, responses to the 2005 fire, and the imperative to deliver housing at unprecedented speed.

The N2 Gateway was conceptualised as a pilot of the new national housing policy, set out in 2004 in the document *Breaking New Ground – The Comprehensive Plan for Housing Delivery*, which would provide rental housing stock for the poor and enable *in situ* upgrades of informal settlements as specified in chapters 12 and 13 of the National Housing Code. This new programme alluded to “a new informal settlement upgrading instrument to support the focused eradication of informal settlements” (Department of Housing, 2004a: 6).

### **4.3.3 Episode 3: Contestation and collapse**

This episode features the Democratic Alliance (DA) takeover of the CCT, the exit of the CCT from the N2 Gateway and the takeover of project management by a state entity, Thubelisha Homes reporting to the Minister. Phase 1 was completed but cost overruns escalated rentals and made the flats unaffordable to people from Joe Slovo. Tenants, who were selected primarily from areas outside Langa, launched a rent boycott, in protest at the many defects in the units. At the same time the state faced intense contestation from informal settlement dwellers at their increasing marginalisation by the project prompting them to initiate eviction court proceedings in the Cape High Court which were upheld before the matter was referred to the Constitutional Court on appeal. The episode closes with the financial collapse of Thubelisha Homes and its replacement by HDA. A detailed chronology of these events is available in Appendix 3.

### **4.3.4 Episode 4: New directions**

The fourth episode features the ruling of the Constitutional Court, upholding the eviction order but imposing stringent conditions which would make relocation extremely expensive, reserving 70% of the houses for qualifying Joe Slovo residents and 30% for backyarders while requiring the state to “meaningfully engage” with the residents. Shortly afterwards Minister Sisulu was reassigned in a Cabinet reshuffle to be replaced by Minister Tokyo Sexwale. On the political front the DA took control of the Western Cape Province and appointed a new MEC for the Provincial Department of Human Settlements. In the Sexwale era a new rapprochement emerged between national and provincial spheres of government. HDA took over as project manager and tried to rectify the situation in the Phase 1 flats. The N2 Gateway reverted to its original vision of providing denser settlement on well-located land with the support of the Provincial Government of the Western

Cape (PGWC) and the HDA approached this as an *in situ* upgrade based on the National Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP).

### ***Proceeding with an in situ upgrade***

In February 2010 the national Minister and provincial MEC for Human Settlements lodged a report to the Constitutional Court in which they set out joint plans for Phase 3 of the N2 Gateway in Langa. This detailed how the state would consult with the residents about the proposed layout (see Figure 6), get the plan approved by the CCT, obtain the environmental and other planning approvals, secure Municipal Infrastructure Grant funding and legally establish the township. The report noted that a steering committee would be established to co-ordinate the allocation process and sign up the current residents of Joe Slovo in order to enable applications for subsidies to be processed. The report proposed greater densification so as to accommodate substantially more than the 1500 persons required by the original Constitutional Court order.



complexities surfaced by the new approach to the N2 Gateway requiring meaningful engagement with “the community”, noting in Clause 11 of his report that:

*The issue of a consultative process has by far posed the most significant challenge to date. Particularly over the last year it has emerged that the community at Joe Slovo is by no means a homogeneous one. There are different interests at stake, there are different demands and there are struggles for the dominant ranking of certain groups over others in the community. As a result it became apparent shortly after the Court Order that the two groups represented in these proceedings were not representative of the entire community at Joe Slovo.*

From this the MEC concluded that “there was a need for a representative group of the entire community to constitute a Joint Steering Committee” and reported that the task of establishing it had presented “inordinate challenges”. The MEC proposed a structure that should include:

- two representatives each of the two groupings of residents in the court proceedings (The Residents and the Task Team);
- three councillors;
- Langa Development Forum;
- two persons representing the interests of Langa backyarders;
- United South African Civic Organisation (USACO);
- South African National Civics Association (SANCO);
- Langa Business Forum;
- PGWC;
- CCT;
- HDA.

The MEC provided details of a number of meetings called to discuss the composition of the task team, which remained highly contested. Although he was able to report that in April 2010 the Joint Project Steering Committee (JPSC) had been established and that the “consultative process is complete and the full co-operation of the residents through the JPSC is secured” (Clause 15), he noted that members of the Task Team were still in disagreement with some elements of the process. His affidavit did not specify what these disagreements and difficulties were but highlighted how the meetings “repeatedly revealed the difficulty of establishing a representative forum to engage with on behalf of the community”.

#### **4.3.5 Episode 5: The *techne* of planning and new contests to survive and thrive**

This episode, which was still in process at the time the research was completed, saw the reassertion of the rationalities of planning and the rendering of political problems as technical ones. This saw the realignment of the apparatus of the state to reassert its power which had suffered erosion and reversal during Episode 3. The HDA reasserted the *techne* of planning, with a more methodical and professional approach to the management of the project in close alliance with national and provincial state spheres, also drawing the CCT closer to the project again. It set out to communicate project progress and negotiate the way forward for Phase 3 using project steering committees. However these rationalities and practices were still challenged by conflict and protest, but their impetus shifted as social actors within Langa and Joe Slovo contested with one another in complex micro struggles to try and secure access to the opportunities offered by the state scheme of improvement, and to avoid displacement or marginalisation.



## 4.4. Langa in 2012

The 2011 census found that there were 9928 formal dwellings in Langa, 2236 backyard shacks and 4658 freestanding shacks and 424 dwellings described as 'other' (City of Cape Town, 2013: 5). The cut-off date for the research was 2012, a year which saw renewed contestation in the N2 Gateway which partly reflects competition for formal housing suggested by the census data.

The JPSC had been an ongoing site of struggle, with several parties no longer attending its meetings and disputes over representation. Bitter contestation had developed, primarily over the allocations process for the units constructed in Phase 3a and allegations of 'informal allocations' of units in the Intersite TRA, as people were moved around in the course of the *in situ* upgrade process.



Figure 7: Langa, Joe Slovo and components of the N2 Gateway in 2012: Source Google Maps

In Figure 7, which depicts Langa in 2012, a number of changes are apparent. The white flats constructed as part of Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway can be seen in the south-west corner of the settlement. Next to them, to the east, is the bonded gap housing constructed by FNB which continued to stand empty, flanked by adjacent show houses initially constructed as an indication of what relatively low-density construction would look like in Phase 3. This model was later abandoned in favour of the two-storey medium-density flats that were under construction in the north-east of the settlement in 2012. To the west are refurbished hostel units which had been turned into family accommodation – the most recent of a number of similar initiatives elsewhere in Langa.

## **4.5. Conclusion**

This chapter and supplementary material in Appendix 2 and 3<sup>17</sup> have set the scene for the presentation of the research findings and analysis of the case study, which surfaces vastly differing perspectives on the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway in the context of Langa as a pilot of the BNG. It presents some indications of the conflicting rationalities informing the actions of a large cast of actors. In this performance diverse state actors read simultaneously from different scripts while other members of the cast extemporise. Sundry voices and social actors, many of whom do not formally appear on the programme, interject from the shadows, often without formal recognition. In switches and reversals of power these marginal actors may come to occupy centre stage as they seek out particular and often mutually conflicting routes in their bid to survive and thrive.

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<sup>17</sup> Appendix 2 profiles the history of Langa between 1927 and 1994 which provides background on the development of the township which could not be included in this chapter for reasons of space while Appendix 3 provides a detailed chronology of the N2 Gateway.

This performance is grounded in the highly dynamic and contested urban spaces which have grown out of the complex social and development history of Langa, its place in the city and its relationship with sending areas in the rural and urban Eastern Cape. The national policy narrative, articulated by the Minister in her 2004 budget speech which prefigured the launch of the N2 Gateway, provides the script intended to direct a heroic journey from a shameful past to 'a better life for all'. However as will be examined in the following chapters, where the actors reflect on their roles in front of and behind the scenes, the case study illuminates the uncertain and broken ground on which this expression of the 'will to govern and improve' must negotiate contending relations of power within the spheres of government, and encounter the messy and often internally conflicted rationalities of those engaged in adaptive strategies to survive and thrive. As Li has observed:

*Governmental interventions routinely produce effects that are contradictory, even perverse. Indeed the messiness of the world is caused in part, at least, by the overlapping of various governmental programs in historical sequence or, concurrently, one program at cross purposes with another.*

Li (2007b: 18-19)

The episodes narrated above reveal successive processes in which the policies and plans of the state have been contested across the different eras and at times overwhelmed by the imperatives driving street-level rationalities. This contest has seen the deeply incised linear regularity and historical power of the Langa settlement grid progressively erased through rapid informal infill, before the N2 Gateway sought to eradicate the informal and reassert the grid of the formal, with diverse and often unintended consequences which are countered in numerous scripts and diverse theatres of resistance.

The research findings presented in the next chapter provide a detailed insight into the complex micropolitics, claims on space and place and strategies of struggle which emerge both in response to, and independently of the N2 Gateway. They will illuminate the multiple local imperatives to survive and thrive of people living in the different spatial settings described above – established residents and tenants in the backyards and people living in a variety of different hostel settings, coupled with new waves of people accessing the city from the rural reserves, drawing on social networks in the hostels and in the burgeoning spaces of informality within the urban grid and, beyond it, in the informal settlement.

# **Chapter 5**

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS – VOICES AND NARRATIVES**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter presents research findings derived from diverse voices and narratives allowing fine-grained portrayals of the “array of agents and objectives” (Watson, 2006) clustered within Langa and the different spheres of the state. They illuminate the social, institutional and spatial cartographies which are the markers of diverse rationalities and ways of seeing. These findings form the central evidence of the case study that will be analysed in Chapter 6 to provide responses to the subsidiary and core research questions and enable the writing back to theory in Chapter 7.

The chapter begins by presenting conversations conducted with diverse actors in Langa which reveal historically embedded and locally situated claims on space and place. These are consolidated or undermined by their encounters with the state and the N2 Gateway. Their stories are threaded through the five episodes which mark the evolution of the N2 Gateway case as detailed in Chapter 4.

The Langa narratives are counterposed to a very different collection of stories recounted by representatives from different branches and departments of the state, together with selected agencies and organisations in its orbit. Each of these reflects particular sightings and histories of engagement with actors in Langa through the N2 Gateway. These narratives are augmented by a review of evidence from secondary data – project archives, reports, media coverage and other sources – in a bid to triangulate and layer the primary data.

## 5.2. The Langa narratives

The narratives of Langa residents in this section are presented in three clusters:

- Cluster 1: Informants in the informal settlement, the hostels and the Intersite TRA – predominantly *amagoduka*, who retain rural connections and whose migration trajectories and post-fire displacements often intersect.
- Cluster 2: Informants who are Cape borners from suburban Langa and the backyards.
- Cluster 3: Informants accommodated in different phases of the N2 Gateway including the Joe Slovo Park flats, the show houses and the Phase 3 higher density ownership units. Some of these informants originated in Clusters 1 and 2 while others who have found accommodation in the N2 Gateway are from outside Langa.

Interviews with informants in each cluster highlight particular themes and issues of relevance to the research questions that emerge from the image-led narrative, subsequently augmented and triangulated with data from secondary sources where this was available.

### 5.3. Cluster 1a: Joe Slovo informal settlement

All the informants interviewed came from villages in the Eastern Cape. These were in the vicinity of the towns of Butterworth, Kentani, Dutywa, Keiskammahoek, King William's Town, Mthatha, Ngcobo, Nqadu, Qumbu, Tsolo, Tsomo and Willowvale. People originating from these rural locations all reported drawing on relatives, social ties and networks to access opportunities in the city, some via the hostels and others directly into the informal settlement. The interviews revealed how the social magnetism inherent in rural space and place tended to be reproduced in urban social clusters as people associated with particular rural home areas gravitated towards particular settlement precincts. This meant, for example that at a certain point along

the interview transect there might be a showing of people from Ngcobo and Mthatha, while in a different but contiguous area people from Dutywa and Tsomo could appear predominant. This suggests that the social geography of the settlement mirrors social ties anchored to particular rural spaces.

A total of 21 interviews were conducted along a zig-zag transect through the informal settlement, commencing with the shacks adjacent to the rental flats of Joe Slovo Park and ending in the north-eastern portion abutting new construction in Phase 3. Many of the informants have played parts in all five episodes of the N2 Gateway set out in Chapter 4. Their life narratives reveal a wide range of personal circumstances and relative well-being, and illuminate the persistence of rural-urban linkages characteristic of those described as *amagoduka*, their precarious and contingent claims on urban space and place and the many strategies of struggle employed by groupings of the poor living in conditions of informality to “survive and thrive”. They also help to distinguish the defining elements which shape the rationalities of informality imprinted on the lives and livelihoods of historic and more recent migrants to the city, and which are further analysed in Chapter 6.

The interviews suggest that the informal dwellings occupied by many of the households interviewed in Joe Slovo should be visualised as nodes marking deep arcs of migration, along which the occupants loop back and forth to the rural areas of the Eastern Cape with different frequencies of visits and lengths of stay. These migration pathways are complex and subject to multiple push and pull factors. The interviews provide insights into the dispersed nature of families and the confluence of rural poverty with urban informality. However there is also evidence that for some households the strength of these rural connections is dimming, in some instances to a point of imminent erasure. This in turn provides insights into the primary coordinates which shape the rationalities and lives of the migrant poor who

are stretched between rural and the urban marginalities. These are infinitely shaded with the content of individual storylines and defy easy generalisation.

### **5.3.1 One story – ‘many things’**

Space does not permit recounting the many informant stories in any detail, so one story has been condensed to reveal the wide array of factors – personal and circumstantial – which contribute to the rationality of informality. An interview with a couple – a man in his forties who had lived in Joe Slovo since 2000, and his wife - provided an unsolicited life history to highlight rural urban linkages, the contribution of informality on well-located land to their livelihood security and the perceived threat posed by the N2 Gateway.

The male informant’s introduction revealed a strong need to be allowed to contextualise his location in this shack in Joe Slovo, in order to establish himself as someone with social roots and a history. He prefaced the interview by stating: “You see there are many things...I need to speak a little about my back ground” (Interview: Joe Slovo 07MF, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011). His story revealed the precarious and contingent character of much of his life journey before he secured a shack in Joe Slovo, found work and was joined by his wife. Just as they seemed to have found some security this was disturbed by the intrusion of the N2 Gateway, which threatened to displace them.

The informant described how he had been raised in turn by his mother, his grandmother and his aunt – the sister of his absent father. His family was poor, lacking money to buy school uniforms and unable to keep him in school. This saw him begin work as a tout for a rural taxi from the age of fifteen. He moved from his home area to live in a shack on the periphery of Butterworth. By the time he was eighteen he had fathered a child and faced claims for compensation from his girlfriend’s family. He lost his job as a taxi tout and left to look for work in Cape



Town, where he found a temporary place to stay with his uncle in Khayelitsha. Subsequently a chance meeting with a 'homeboy' from Dutywa provided a connection which secured him a low-paid job at Tygerberg Hospital. Shortly after he had started work there his mother died and he had to borrow money to bury her at their rural home. After the funeral he was left with no money to return to the city and remained stuck in his home village until the mother of his homeboy friend bought him a bus ticket. Once back at work he experienced a period of depression which saw him seek treatment from a *sangoma*.<sup>18</sup> He took leave from his job again to return to the rural areas where he was sent to recover in a space that afforded social meaning, but his absence from work cost him his job. Eventually returning to the city in 1999 he contacted people from his home area who were staying in the Zones in Langa. He managed to secure a temporary place to stay in a heavily overcrowded single-storey hostel in Zone 19 before paying R70 for an informally allocated site on which to construct a shack in Joe Slovo. In 2002 he was joined by the mother of his children. Later their shack was destroyed in a fire and they were moved to their present location. At the time of the interview he reported that both he and his wife had found work – he in a scrapyard and she as a domestic worker – which brought their combined monthly income to just over the subsidy threshold of R3500. After going to register themselves at the housing office in Langa they discovered that they would not qualify for a unit in Phase 3 of the N2 Gateway:

*Initially they said the houses were going to go to people who don't get paid very much. What are people like us, who earn over, going to do? Where are we going to stay?*

Interview: Joe Slovo 07MF, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011

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<sup>18</sup> A diviner consulted to address spiritual and emotional distress.

When Joe Slovo residents took to the highway to protest housing allocation criteria and attempts to relocate them to Delft, both the man and his wife participated in the protest action which they hoped would make the state listen to their problems.

This individual framing story highlights some of the drivers of informality and the ways in which access to well-located land was essential for exiting poverty. It illustrates the incipient clash that sets the plural priorities of the informal and migrant poor against the singular focus anchoring individual branches of the state, which in the case of the N2 Gateway focused on housing delivery.

### **5.3.2 The meaning of ‘home’ and the rationalities of migration**

All the informants interviewed in Joe Slovo had rural connections, although these varied in continuity and strength. Irrespective of people’s actual home location the photograph (B02)<sup>19</sup> depicting an unnamed Eastern Cape rural village scene prompted animated conversations concerning the nature of home. For many of the migrants interviewed the rural village continues to represent a place of meaning where the social value and belonging of the individual are reaffirmed, where family members are buried and essential continuities between past and present are maintained and expressed through rites of passage and acts of ritual. For many these remain spaces of personal renewal in which they are temporarily released from urban pressures and the “perpetual mud, shit and fire of shack life” (Zikode, 2013) elaborated on below. Urban migrants in the informal settlement report visiting their home areas with varying degrees of regularity. These visits provide relief from the dismissive and often hostile social attitudes which continue to be projected onto informal settlement dwellers within Langa, who Cape borners associate with crime and land invasion.

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<sup>19</sup> See Appendix 1 for the compilation of photographs used for the image-led narrative interview process.

While these interviews highlight the general collapse and de-agrarianisation of rural livelihoods, evidenced by the widespread dependence on social grants and urban remittances, rural homesteads are revealed as continuing depositories of generations of investment. The transcripts draw important distinctions between the concepts and meanings associated with home and those associated with a shack constructed as a temporal bridgehead into the economy.

The interviews also identified people – often women in female-headed households – whose rural ties were eroded and whose rural homes were in disrepair. In both categories it is clear that the particular low-cost foothold which people have secured in well-located urban space is central to their ability to survive and thrive, whether in the form of a stretched household which connects informal urban dwellings and rural homesteads or as a household inhabiting an informal dwelling without this connection.

Interviews confirm that migration is not a choice but a necessity, that contains within it the recognition that life will be hard and eked out in the urban margins.

*You come here because you have children and you stay because you have no alternative. These are things that make you wonder in life if you should endure these things, but we weren't created to be equal, and it doesn't seem as if we ever get to have what is suitable for us.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 08FF, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011

Improving access to health services appears to be a further key driver influencing the move of older people to the city, some of whom reported closing up their rural homesteads to join family members in the informal settlement where they were welcomed, partly because of their access to a pension.

The impacts of unemployment and the economic push to migrate surfaced strongly. A male informant spoke about his deceased parents' home being closed up while he

and his sisters migrated in search of work, only to be reopened when family members return to the village at the end of the year.

*Inf: Everyone, [isiXhosa] all of my sisters are also looking for work so there is no one staying there now, but we open it up at times when someone goes down, like if I go down during December.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 03M, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011

The interviews also identified informants (usually single women) who reported that their rural homes had fallen in disrepair. One informant described how her homestead had become run down. It consisted of a rondavel, a two roomed flat and an 'eight corner'<sup>20</sup> which had collapsed but which she sought to restore:

*Now I start afresh. As a single parent I am struggling. I managed to build one (thatched) rondavel.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 05F, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011

These attempts at rebuilding were acknowledged as risky, as no-one was staying in the homestead. The logic of this desire to maintain a rural presence despite poverty and hardship reflects its continued recognition as a site of meaning. Historically rural homesteads have been sites of intergenerational investment by male migrants and their descendants, as marriage is patrilocal. However the willingness of women from single-headed households to invest in rural homesteads, where rights and tenure security are less clear, was more difficult to determine. These suggest far reaching changes in rural household formation to accommodate the predominance of female headed households. One informant speaking about the dwellings that made up her family homestead in the village stated that: "There are many. I even

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<sup>20</sup> An eight corner refers to a rondavel with a particular zinc roofing design made up of octagonal panels.

have my own one. It is a flat with two rooms” (Interview: Joe Slovo 06F, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011).

The presence of family members living in the rural homestead back in the Eastern Cape is an important factor shaping the relationship between urban migrants and their homes of origin. One woman spoke about how her mother remained in the Eastern Cape and looked after some of her children. When the children reached school-going age they would be enrolled in the township school. At the same time she was continuing to invest in her rural two-roomed flat “which we are extending on one side” (Interview: Joe Slovo 08FF 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011).

### **5.3.3 Migration trajectories**

Discussion of migration trajectories was stimulated in part by images B08 and B10 (see Appendix 3) which depicted hostel settings – one the aftermath of the 2005 fire which burned into the Zones, and the other unrenovated New Flats hostel blocks in the foreground and a renovated block in the background.

Informal settlement dwellers reported diverse trajectories of migration. Several informants who had once lived in the hostels reported later moving out to occupy shacks in the informal settlement. There was also a trend among migrants, evident in the stories told by some informants, to seek out people from their home areas in the hostels when they first arrived in Cape Town in order to secure a temporary place to stay, before later securing access to a shack. The interviews revealed chains of connection which appear to have gone largely unrecognised by the state housing imaginary as expressed through the planning of the N2 Gateway, and the ways in which the N2 Gateway has remained largely delinked from parallel schemes to upgrade the hostels. These migration trajectories also highlight the complex micropolitics associated with claims on space and place. They revealed the impetus toward the informal, propelled by the crowded living conditions and lack of privacy

in certain of the hostels, where a family's claims to space were limited to a bed in a shared room originally designed for single men. But this was offset by perceptions of relative safety in hostels, which were not deemed to be as much at risk of fire as shacks, and where, in certain cases there were long intergenerational histories of occupancy by migrant families – these hostels were regarded as safe social spaces, regulated through acknowledged social rules and practices.

The frequency of linkages between shack and hostel dwellers revealed the fine mesh of social relations connecting certain hostel dwellers and informal settlement residents, both mediated by a third space – a shared rural village or district of origin – all of which remain largely invisible within the *techné* of planning.

The conversations revealed the complex equations which people crafted to compare the contingent merits of different spatial and social settings. One female informant reflected on her shock at arriving from a rural area, with its deeply encoded spatial and social orders, to stay in a dilapidated New Flats hostel block for three years. She described the difficulty she had in adapting to living in a setting where different families shared a single room.

*Inf: The bed was representing the family...If you come to visit somebody, we need to go to sit to that single bed. Don't touch another bed because it's another family...And if a person, she want to sleep...she just, ahhh, sleep but another people are still talking. Some they are still busy doing their things.*

It was this discomfort which prompted her move to the informal settlement.

*Inf: Yes I was happy because I was knowing that I was going to have my own privacy. No-one is going to disturb me.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 05F, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011

The issue of privacy surfaced again and again throughout the interviews, in relation to both the hostels and shack life. This relates to space, noise, cooking, eating and

sex. However not everyone who had moved into Joe Slovo via the hostels felt the same way. Two female informants who had previously stayed in New Flats identified the relative safety of hostel life.

*Inf 1: It was much better because there was no fire. This is because there were rooms for sleeping but cooking was done in one kitchen. Then you go to sleep in your room.*

*Inf 2: At least it's better than in Joe Slovo.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 08FF 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011

This sense of relative physical and social safety, together with the advantages of basic levels of service was picked up by others who had also stayed in the hostels prior to moving to the informal settlement. It suggests some of the key criteria that determine how people rate and compare places.

*Inf: [isiXhosa] In a way life in the halls was fine, because we were somewhat protected, unlike now... Fire wasn't easy you see... We didn't have children go missing and such things.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 02F 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011

As was indicated in the previous chapter many younger men either lost their access to the hostels, or to the shacks which had been built in the open spaces between hostel blocks when hostel upgrading took place. Some moved out voluntarily to effect a generational separation so they could live independently from older men – a factor that in the early years gave Joe Slovo a particular social character and a high youth demographic. This, as will be evident in other sources, evoked hostility from established Langa residents in the backyards and elsewhere who saw young single men from the rural areas and recent arrivals in the city moving ahead of them in the line to access houses.

The interviews reveal the constancies of movement – between the rural areas and locations within the city, and within Langa between hostels, backyards and Joe Slovo informal settlement. Several informants also reported having moved several times within the settlement since their arrival as a consequence of fire, associated rebuilding and reblocking activities and the clearing of portions of land ahead of construction associated with the N2 Gateway. Overall the combination of voluntary and enforced moves reinforces the precarious nature of life and the importance of retaining a claim to space in the informal settlement.

#### **5.3.4 Bringing up children: perspectives on informality and the promise of development**

Extended conversations about living conditions and concerns of parents about bringing up children in the informal settlements were provoked by images B01 and B07. The conversations reveal the tension between the ‘bare life’ of survival and the promise of a ‘brick house’ with its associations of security which often surfaced when parents spoke of their concerns about how to bring up their children. Informants voiced shared concerns about bringing up children in the informal settlement, but their responses to these differed widely. For many the informal settlement was no place to bring up a child:

*Inf: I don't like my child to grow up in the place like this, because (there) is too much skollies and thugs... Yeah, so he must grow up there by my mother and go there (to the rural areas).*

Interview: Joe Slovo 19MF, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Informants sharing this perspective would rather their children were brought up in a rural environment about which they felt more secure. For others there was no alternative but for their children to stay with them in the informal settlement despite consensus about the risks and the stress this would cause the parents. For many of



these parents – especially women – ‘brick houses’ would release them from the daily struggle to keep their children safe. This hope of securing better living conditions, coupled with the anticipation of exclusion and displacement, exposes the enormous tensions and explains the intense anger, conflict and mistrust generated by the N2 Gateway. For many people in the informal settlement there was a tacit recognition that informality was a precondition for their access to the city, particularly if they are to obtain a foothold in well-located areas like Langa. But while recognising and embracing the economic logic of informality, informants were acutely aware of the wide range of threats associated with life in the shacks and the risks these presented for their children. The image of a brick houses on a plot of land was endowed with a sense of order, visibility and improved conditions of safety.

*If you want to take my child its easy here. Once she has gone out I cannot see her there amongst all these shacks – shack after shack after shack. I don't know where my child is. She could be picked up and put in a car because I cannot see her. But if you stay in a brick house there are many gaps between the houses so that you can see and the main road is far away. You are on top.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 08FF, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011

These concerns, together with those following below highlight the internally conflicted attitudes to informality.

### **5.3.5 ‘Mud, shit and fire’**

In addition to specific concerns about bringing up children there are broader concerns about the quality of life in shacks. Zikode’s (2013) recent characterisation of the key determinants of shack life in the subheading above presents a hierarchy of risk which resonates strongly with informant narratives and experiences in Joe Slovo. Conversations about living conditions also introduce particular sightings of

and encounters with the state and surface perspectives about the relationship between agents of the state and the informal poor.

Flooding is a winter phenomenon which brings discomfort but which typically has a limited impact on the arrangement of space. People may move temporarily from low-lying areas but as soon as the water levels recede they will reoccupy their dwellings. Occasionally the city will seek to prevent resettlement by dumping rubble to make it impossible to build in certain areas. Informants are quite matter-of-fact when talking about the winter flooding. They do not have high expectations of an external solution or that those temporary measures which have been put in place by the City will continue to work in the long term.

Both men and women informants identify acute health and sanitation problems:

*Inf: There are a number of problems which I have seen in the community. Firstly the children playing in dirty water which gives them a rash. Secondly their parents often throw out dirty napkins outside and the children play with them. They also play down at the river by the side of the toilets [which] are leaking and overflowing into the water. This is what I've seen and I don't like it.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 16F, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012

The bucket system in the high-density informal settlement is a universal source of anger, shame and complaint. The proximity of these toilets to people's dwellings is a major factor which prompts 'vandalisation' and informal demolition.

*Inf2: [isiXhosa] We're close to places where things get dumped, where rubbish is dumped, the water is dirty, the toilets, just everything that's dirty is right here at the back.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 12FF, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Proximity to toilets also has gender, age and safety implications. Informants spoke about the risks associated with having to visit a distant bucket latrine in the night and the humiliations associated with having to perform bodily functions in the presence of others in the shacks.

The ubiquity of fire and the immanence of its presence make it one of the defining factors of informal settlement life. Its power to claim lives and destroy possessions accumulated through years of work features again and again in life narratives of informal settlement residents. As can be seen from Chapter 4, fire has played a central role in shaping the settlement. It has taken many forms – myriad small fires as well as mega fires which were declared disasters. However the confusion which surrounds these sudden erasures also opened up opportunities for local leadership figures and home-area social networks to try and redraw local boundaries, extend dwellings and insert new people into the settlement.

The same events also represented opportunities for the authorities and trustees to try and reassert control through the layout of settlement grids and ‘blocking out’ exercises, attempts to limit settlement densities, update records and renumber dwellings. Each fire – small or large – has provided the cue for minor skirmishes or major contestations over the control of space. These contestations shed important light on the underlying rationalities which drive them.

The high incidence of fire in Joe Slovo has been attributed to the youthful demographic of its population and a relative absence of social controls in the early years of the settlement. Fire also provides a window revealing broader contestations over the control of space. In 2004 an evaluation of the Ukuvuka Fire Mitigation programme found that:

*There is also a history of tension between residents in formal housing in Langa and people in the settlement. The former have seen their house prices fall. There*

*have also been allegations that the banks have redlined the area making it difficult for would be buyers to obtain bonds.*

(de Satgé and MacGregor, 2004: 38-39)

The 2005 fire was an important precursor to the construction of the N2 Gateway, as discussed in Chapter 4. Stewart (2008), whose dissertation studies the consequences of the 2005 fire describes its contribution to the “dissolution of the social fabric”.

*It was clear that many families had moved down from the Eastern Cape into a particular sub community where their extended families were living. As a result a support network was established and there was an implicit understanding about relationships and style. One of the reasons given for the high levels of conflict and generally uncontrollable and unacceptable behaviour within the tent villages ... was the fact that these sub-communities had been fragmented in the relocation process... In addition some survivors attributed much of the conflict to the fact that “Joe Slovo” residents had been housed with “The Zone” (sic) residents.*

(Stewart, 2008: 118-119)

Several informants reported that their shacks had been burnt down more than once – in some cases as many as three times. Some had experienced shack fires where they had lost everything because they had been away at work when the fire broke out. However this was not a uniform experience as several informants reported never having experienced losses from a shack fire.

The conditions of “mud, shit and fire” in the informal settlement, combined with the social risks associated with life there, and the precarious nature of people’s livelihoods and survival strategies are offset to some extent by invisible social ties and safety nets which contribute to the presence (or relative absence) of social order within the informal settlement. As is examined further below, this often fragile

order was disturbed as a consequence of external intervention such as the N2 Gateway which, as will be examined, stirred up so much more than the immediate issues of entitlement and access to housing.

### **5.3.6 Rationalities of hope and the changing character of resistance**

For many people the day-to-day experiences of informality discussed above are constituted as a relatively new spatial and social script located within the broader and deeply familiar idiom of migrancy. The principal elements moulding this new story are similar to hostel-based migrancy – the distance from home, the social marginality of migrants in the city, the re-enlistment of rural social networks to stake and defend claims on informal urban space and place. But there are important differences, too. A persistent hope for redemptive change – something that will sweep away all trouble and misery – co-exists with a deep pessimism about who benefits from the N2 Gateway and similar schemes of improvement. This is coupled with spikes of popular anger and desperation at the threat of exclusion and the perceived failures of government to address local needs.

The initial leadership in the informal settlement mirrored hostel and rural hierarchies, with leadership provided by older men. However the increasingly youthful demographic of the settlement contributed to the erosion, although not necessarily the replacement, of these familiar codes of patriarchal social order. Subsequent leaders of local organisation and their challengers were increasingly youthful. Many structures came to involve women as well as men. This suggests interesting parallels with the social and political challenge posed by urban youth in the mid-1970s and 1980s, albeit in a different socio-political setting. The contemporary challenge is mounted by a new generation of the subaltern and the marginal, against a rebadged social and political order under the banner of a developmental state which goes to great lengths to assert the primacy of the poor as the focus of development policy and programmes. Despite the promises of policy

and the implementation of programmes these are increasingly perceived as benefiting the local equivalent of the “vast assemblage of brokers, advisors, political workers, crooks and contractors [which] surrounds the ‘official state’” that Corbridge et al. have observed in India (2005: 4).

### **5.3.7 Attempts to make the state “come closer” – the emergence of the Task Team in Joe Slovo**

An informant (Interview: JoeSlovo 17F, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012) who was one of the first occupants of the settlement, and active in the earlier committees prior to the emergence of the Task Team and the committee known as the Residents, highlighted the changing character of engagement with the state. The initial strategy of the early occupants of the settlement was to use formal occupation and encroachment, with no engagement with the state. The next phase involved low-level negotiation with city officials, in the early years after the settlement was first established, to provide some basic services. The slow response of the state was met by formalised protests involving marches and the handover of memoranda which aimed to draw attention to the continuing absence of services in the informal settlement. This informant described early marches and protests to pressure the city to provide services and her faith that simply by alerting the institutions of democratic government change would come.

It took a declared disaster in the form of the 2000 fire to ensure that water, electricity, basic roads and bucket toilets were finally provided. Service delivery on well-located land stimulated further influx into the settlement, which in turn drove up fire incidence, culminating in the 2005 fire and the launch of the N2 Gateway.

An interview with a Task Team leader conducted as part of the Legal Resources Centre Oral History Project indicates that the Task Team was first established to combat fires in the settlement: “We started forming the Task Team when we found

that there was a problem of fires in Joe Slovo and because we saw that there were many fires there”(LRC, 2008: 1). However in the aftermath of the 2005 fire it seemed as if the authorities were starting to move everyone to Delft.

*We started now asking questions to the people who were involved, asking people to leave. Then they told us they are moving everyone to Delft... They said no, they want this space for constructing houses.*

Task Team leader (ibid.)

The interview describes how informal settlement residents experienced marginalisation by the N2 Gateway Phase 1 and the proposed construction of credit linked houses in Phase 2.

*“We said we were not going to accept that, it is then that we decided that as a committee of only males together, when we started resisting, we said, we had a meeting and we appointed a Task Team”.*

Task Team leader (ibid.)

Once it became clear that the N2 Gateway was displacing rather than accommodating the poor, this prompted the emergence of a more militant politics of resistance. As Joe Slovo residents realised that they would not be able to afford the flats in Phase 1 and would also be excluded from the bonded housing planned for Phase 2 so groupings of residents opted to occupy the N2 freeway. Interviews reveal a mounting anger at being ignored and unheard, and a stubborn hope that protests such as the blockage of the N2 with its city-wide impact might have the effects of making those with power “come closer”. A majority of informants reported taking an active role in these protests – something that many obviously took a pride in:

*Inf 1: I was one of them that closed, that blocked the road there... You see at the time when we were demonstrating, what was in me was that we weren't paid attention to, we wanted to be listened to. They didn't want to come here when*

*we called them, so then we thought let's go and close the road down and they will come and ask us, "What's wrong?"*

*Q: After [isiXhosa] you went to the N2 did they listen?*

*Inf 1: After [isiXhosa] that? No, (but) they came closer.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 13M, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2012

This notion of the state as a distant, collective and often faceless authority was a thread in several interviews. People spoke of '*rhulumente*'<sup>21</sup>. Where government took on a human face it was usually that of a prominent figure like the Minister, a local municipal councillor or a representative of Thubelisha Homes, the project management agent.

It was the distance of government or its coercive concentration in an unpopular political leader, councillor or bureaucrat which seemed to facilitate militancy. As a Task Team leader stated:

*All the grievances that we laid on our memorandum were never considered, which is why we decided to barricade the N2. We thought perhaps that they would come but they came out on that day and they never came that day...the National Minister she went to media and threatened us that she is going to remove us from the waiting list.*

(LRC, 2008: 4)

This sense of dismissal bordering on contempt, an inability to "hear something that is coming from people that are living in informal settlements", (ibid.) was the primary engine of protest and organisation which led to the high profile court cases. While the Residents also briefed lawyers it was clear that they had a smaller following in the settlement. It was the Task Team and particular individuals

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<sup>21</sup> The Xhosa term for government



associated with it who attained a prominence which most other informal settlement structures or leaders could never achieve. This created opportunities for some of the members of the Task Team to jump the barriers which had confined them to the informal settlement. Linkages with the LRC, DAG, CORC, FEDUP and SDI, as well as with other organisations which provided services and support, yielded invitations to speak and travel which opened up new opportunities for some of the leadership, including offers of employment. Settlement leadership developed media profiles, addressed courts, were elected to other structures in the Federation. One of the prominent Task Team leaders was profiled by the *Mail and Guardian* in its '200 Young South Africans' supplement (Sosibo, 2011). At the same time these opportunities introduced divisions, as there were those in the Task Team who were less educated or lacked the requisite English fluency to make this crossover (Interview: Task Team01, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010).

Within Joe Slovo and the N2 Gateway members of the Task Team found themselves in positions where they could influence allocation processes, or at least were seen by others to have this capacity. As soon as the state was ordered to engage in processes of 'meaningful engagement' by order of Constitutional Court through the establishment of the Project Steering Committee – a legally sanctioned consultative space – this served to redraw the terrain of engagement. The power of technical rationality was reasserted while simultaneously creating new opportunities for deals and manoeuvres among the leaders of groupings with claims to represent groupings of the informal poor, as they were drawn closer to the agenda of the state and its trustees. As the construction of Phase 3 of the N2 Gateway went ahead, the focus of power shifted from the tactics of resistance to the processes and mechanisms of allocations. These increasingly involved the tactics of opportunistic and predatory 'self-help', as individuals sought to capture positions of influence to outflank other

contenders from among the ranks of the poor and secure expanded benefits and patronage.

*Then, as the house building began, community members started to complain that the Task Team leaders were being hired as Community Liaison Officers and applying for tenders as subcontractors within the project.*

(Sachs, 2013)

This was corroborated in interviews with informal settlement residents (Interview: Joe Slovo 17F, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012) and others associated with the JPSC, (Interview: Hostels 01M, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2011) who confirmed that a prominent Task Team leader was running a security company with a contract to guard the buildings under construction in Phase 3. This was followed by allegations that:

*The Task Team apparently changed its strategy and allegedly began allocating the new houses to friends, to family, and to people who never resided in Joe Slovo but were willing to pay them a fee.*

(Sachs, 2013)

These allegations also surfaced in interviews with Langa residents in different settings who revealed a mounting mistrust of local leadership figures, whom some informants perceived as increasingly self-serving and associated with suspect allocation processes (Interview: Joe Slovo 07MF, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011).

The allegations reached a peak once the allocation process for the Phase 3 houses got under way and surfaced prominently at Intersite, where the Task Team leadership and the local Intersite committee came under mounting criticism from new voices such as the Abahlali cluster in the Intersite TRA. These trends divided existing organisation, eroded trust and turned the tide in the flows of power in favour of agents of the state.

Towards the end of the research period there were inferences that respected leaders of the Task Team structures had been “co-opted” by SDI, which introduced divisions into the Task Team and gave the Residents Committee a new lease of life as it attracted “various side-lined community members” (Interview: AEC 01M, 16 October 2012). In 2012 a new structure known as the Area Committee was established, also claiming to represent those remaining in the informal settlement. This meant there were now three contesting committees. In 2013 violent clashes erupted over the demolition of the Chris Hani Hall (Damba, 2013), the meeting place used by Area Committee, allegedly at the instigation of members of the Task Team who felt challenged by this new structure. Whatever the truth of these allegations, the ongoing contestation in Joe Slovo highlights the volatile and fractured space held by local organisations.

### **5.3.8 Perspectives on Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway**

The occupation of the N2 followed the realisation that the residents of Joe Slovo had been duped and that very few if any households in the informal settlement would be able to afford a rental unit in the new housing. People in the settlement had lost a claim to place. The majority of informants stated in response to image B19 of the Phase 1 flats that they knew very little about what was currently happening inside the rental flats or who was staying there. Their interest was largely historical and evoked a residual sense of anger and betrayal at what many informants saw as a broken promise.

Some informants had picked up rumours of problems with the buildings and several knew that a rent boycott was in progress. This contributed to a persistent sense of suspicion and dysfunctionality in relation to the N2 Gateway as a whole. Where informants did express an opinion it was often to highlight how the Phase 1 development had been for the benefit of outsiders rather than the residents of Langa.

*Inf: [isiXhosa] No, I don't know any of the people that stay there, because when those flats were built they said they were ours, because there were so many shacks that were removed and moved to Delft and we were told that they were building them for us. But at the end of the day [isiXhosa] when the flats were finished and meant to be inhabited, they told us no, the people of Joe Slovo don't qualify.*

*Q: [isiXhosa] What was the reason you didn't qualify?*

*Inf: [isiXhosa] Because of money.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 01F 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011

The single unifier concerning the allocation of housing in the N2 Gateway was agreement amongst informants residing in Langa that housing developed within the township should be for people with pre-existing claims on space there. This suggests a series of concentric circles of perceived belonging which places the Langa borners and backyarders at the centre, followed by longstanding hostel dwellers with intergenerational presence in old and upgraded hostel settings. On the periphery are residents who have constructed shacks as the informal fringe within the Zones and other grey hostel environments, followed by Joe Slovo residents who were also differentiated by informants in terms of their length of settlement and the nature of their migration trajectory. Outsiders obtaining places in Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway from other townships in Cape Town were widely seen as opportunistic interlopers. One informant noted:

*There are some people they are from Langa (in Phase 1) but the majority are from the outside. And the problem for Langa is that they take people from Khayelitsha and put them in here. This is what causes quarrels to take people from the outside and bring them here. This creates a lot of problems where houses in Langa are taken by people from the outside.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 16F 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2012

Informant narratives emphasise the outrage felt that the Phase 1 flats were allocated to people that they “did not know” – an indicator of the strength of socially acknowledged belonging.

*Q: Why were people angry at that time? What were their demands?*

*Inf: [isiXhosa] Not getting houses from the ones that are here. The houses are here but we don't get them, and we had hoped that they were building for us, and then we find that the people that get them we don't know.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 03M, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011

### **5.3.9 Waves of displacement**

The N2 Gateway has been dogged by the practice and threat of exclusion. The unaffordability of the rental flats of Phase 1 represented the first wave of this exclusion. The construction of the bonded houses in Phase 2 was the second wave and by 2012 a third wave was forming, with different categories of non-qualifiers emerging as allocations were determined for Phase 3. These included people who were longstanding residents but perceived themselves as remote from those influencing allocations; people who were relatively recent arrivals in the settlement; and people resident in the settlement for years but who earned more than the subsidy threshold.

An interview with a bishop in one of the Pentecostal Churches operating in the settlement revealed that she and her husband earned too much to qualify for a unit in Phase 3. This meant that the substantial dwelling and church which she and her congregants had constructed in the informal settlement would have to be demolished as the new construction advanced.

*Informant : [isiXhosa] Now that is not right with me. I'm not going to get a house even though I've been staying here a long time in this place.*

All of these residents have been threatened with displacement and many perceive that this will be to Delft. The economics of living in Delft are uppermost in most informants' minds; Delft is far from the city and transport is restricted to more expensive taxis. The relative affordability of train transport in Langa is an important saving which would be lost, while Delft is widely regarded as unsafe.

*Inf: We just told them we don't want to go to Delft. We want to stay here in Joe Slovo*

*Q: And what were your reasons for not wanting to go to Delft?*

*Inf: There in Delft there's no train. ...It's not safe.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 19MF, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Several informants highlighted concerns about the effects of a move to Delft which corresponds with the findings from other studies (DAG, 2007). Some informants expressed concern that, as before, people would be excluded from the Phase 3 development; others indicated that they have given up hope of being accommodated.

*Inf: Yho! [isiXhosa] we've been waiting for a long time. We've not been getting (houses) for a long time; and for years they keep saying, "They're going to build for us, they're going to build for us."*

*Q: [isiXhosa] You're waiting with red eyes now?*

*Inf: Yhu! [isiXhosa] we don't have time for it anymore, we've already given up.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 12FF, 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012

Image B012, which depicts part of the TRA in Delft, elicited mixed responses. One informant spoke of some people "being pressured to move there by their streets and

(those) that go because they want to” (Interview: Joe Slovo 11F, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2011).

Another informant argued that while “there are some that moved, but in those spaces that the people left other people came and occupied those spaces, you understand?” (Interview: Joe Slovo: 14M, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2012).

This informant said that people were finding ways to come back to Joe Slovo because of the high costs of staying in Delft. Another informant confirmed that “if they start building I would choose to have a house built here, because Delft is out the way for transport” (Interview: Joe Slovo 06F 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011).

Informants highlighted some concerns about the conditions in the TRA saying that “life is not good there because there are asbestos walls”. This was echoed by others – one who stated:

*Inf: [isiXhosa] Some of them were complaining about getting chest infections, because of the materials they used to build with.*

But this informant went on to say that in her opinion “they didn’t face too much hardship. They didn’t have a fire” (Interview: Joe Slovo 02F, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011).

Another informant (Joe Slovo 05F, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011) spoke about a friend who had been running a small business in Langa selling chicken and chips. Since being relocated to Delft her business was “too slow than before” because so many people in Delft were not working and could not afford to buy from her. However the same informant was approving of her friend’s “beautiful” brick house and commented that she had extended it already.

### **5.3.10 Cycles of hope and mistrust**

The interviews reveal how the N2 Gateway triggered cycles of hope and mistrust. Agents of the state made statements and promises which initially suggested hope and inclusion. However, in almost every instance these were quickly modified, subjected to delays or completely revoked, triggering deepening counter-cycles of

mistrust. Promises made by the state were almost always silent on the identity of those who would benefit; identification of beneficiaries was left to the last minute, resulting in confirmations and reversals which evoked further suspicion of corrupt deals. This mistrust emerged in the conversation when informants were presented with an image (B04) of an architectural model depicting the planned developments in Phase 3 (See Appendix 3). Most people expressed doubt that the final development could look at all like the drawings, which depicted representations of buildings, trees and paved and green spaces and which were largely sanitised of people. Similar sentiments were expressed in relation to the image of a billboard on the N2 (B11) stating 'N2 Gateway: Joe Slovo Phase 3 – Coming soon'. These images were accompanied by a tagline from the Freedom Charter declaring that "Slums shall be abolished".

Some informants responded that the development depicted in the image could not be for them.

*Q: When you see this picture, what do you think? I mean, do -.*

*Inf: Ja, nee, this is a picture – I don't see that I will qualify,*

Interview Joe Slovo 07MF, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011

One informant drew attention to the grand plans for Phase 1 and their flawed implementation, which had prompted the rent boycott as a result of poor build quality, citing leaks and damp so bad in some flats that "your shoes can become green on the top of your cupboard" (Interview: Joe Slovo 07MF, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011).

A sense of the widening gap between image, official discourse and reality was a common sentiment which contributed to an expectation of exclusion on the part of some informants:

*Q: Did this board (B11) give you hope when you saw it the first time?*



*Inf: Yes.*

*Q: And now – how would you describe things?*

*Inf: I'm so disappointed...I don't have hope anymore.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 17F, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012

Other informants continued to express hope that they would qualify because they had been registered. The trappings of governmentality, the processes of registration and recording of particulars remain a powerful trope signifying that individuals have been formally seen by the state, yet those people registered still lacked any certainty that they would be allocated a unit. Registrations carried out by the state blurred with those carried out by NGOs.

Informants alluded to a string of registration and enumeration processes that had been carried out several times by state and non-state actors. Each of these processes had resulted in the allocation of a number – numbers for applications for electricity readiboards, numbers denoting inclusion in the original CCT database prepared in 2002, numbers allocated through a subsequent survey in 2004, and more numbers attributed to the CORC task team enumeration in 2009. These were further discussed in relation to image B14, which depicted a self-enumeration conducted by CORC in another settlement (See Appendix 3).

A former Councillor provided his perspectives on the various processes of registration and the confusion which ensued concerning who could lay a legitimate claim to a place in the development. He highlighted how each successive survey created new lists of potential beneficiaries and argued that the self-enumeration process carried out by CORC and the Task Team was primarily an exercise to assist those prominent in the Task Team leadership, who were relatively recent arrivals in the settlement, to facilitate their claims on space.

*Inf: The Joe Slovo people became very confused. They did not know which, which was the authentic number. Let's say ...the original numbers would be Zone 30, Block D, 201 – that is on the basis of the work that I did with (named City officials). ... That gives now the exact address. Now (Name) comes in later (2004) only to find that now there were more people... People who were not there before 2002 were now formalised and they regarded themselves as people who must also benefit. The third database then, the one that was conducted by your Task Team people – I've never seen it when I was a councillor up until today. What I know is that people like those (Names) who are founder members of the Task Team, helped themselves to, to officialise. Remember I said to you when we started the process they were not there, meaning they would not appear on the 2002 database. The thing to accommodate themselves so that they can benefit is to put... themselves into some kind of a database – and that's how the other database was born, which is now the third database. My question is now: for administrative purpose, which is the reliable database?*

Interview: Former Langa Councillor 02 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012

The proliferation of databases and lists created situations where numbers had been duplicated, erasing or concealing identities in the process. One informant acknowledged that officially his shack did not exist as the number on it was a duplicate of one being used by someone else:

*Inf: The old number is here, (pointing to the door). The numbers that are here are not correct. The numbers have been taken by another group for their area so here I am staying in this house and the number has been taken by somebody else.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 16F, 24<sup>th</sup> February 2012

This snowballing of complexity and the multiplication of lists created mounting uncertainties about the future of people staying in Joe Slovo and the blurring of formal and informal approvals.

Informants highlighted how at first each registration seemed to offer the hope of gaining approval “in the computers”, but as allocations proceeded without a transparent system people began to question whether they would find a place in the development.

*Inf: [isiXhosa] I got on (the database) when they put these numbers on (pointing to the different numbers painted on the shack door). I was on the first database, for the houses that are now gone, you understand? Then again with the Task Team. This one is promising, because they put us all in the database, and then they tell me to apply for a house no matter what happens. Then I thought, I've been in Slovo for a long time and I don't have guarantees that I'll get a house.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 02F 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2011

Another informant noted that “I have hope only because of the committee. When they talk, they talk very nicely” (Interview: Joe Slovo 0 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2011). One informant implied that he had provided information reluctantly and remained suspicious as to how this information will be used. This suggests that there are concerns about visibility and how the biopolitics of lists and the capture of identities may be a mechanism to enable access as well as a means to effect displacement.

*Q: [isiXhosa] How do you feel about these different faces coming here and asking you for information and taking your ID details. How do you find that?*

*Inf: [isiXhosa]: No, we don't take this well because when we are being written down we're not sure what the information is being used for and by whom.*

Interview Joe Slovo 09MF, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011

One informant first speaks about how houses will be for “the people who came here first” but then raises his concerns about “the thing of selling a flat to someone who doesn’t even come from here and doesn’t belong here” (Interview: Joe Slovo 14M, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2012). This sentiment highlights the fine-grained hierarchies of belonging and the perceived legitimacy of different claims on space and their intersections with systems of governmentality and wider biopolitical order. The distinction between insiders and outsiders – those with socially recognised rights within particular spaces versus those who find another route to insert themselves – is replicated in many guises and settings and emerges as a set of cross-cutting contestation over space and belonging within Langa. -

### **5.3.11 Claims on space and place – relationships between *amagoduka* and Cape borners**

Image B17, depicting a freestanding house in a fenced yard in Settlers, stimulated conversations which explored perceptions of the social relationships between *amagoduka* and ‘Cape borners’ and further highlighted contested social and physical claims on space and place. Many spoke about the social divisions between informal settlement residents and their neighbours in Settlers. The allusion to “brick houses” which emerged as a signifier of security in earlier discourse was now evoked as an indicator of difference and social division. “They stay in brick houses and there is no trust” (Interview: Joe Slovo 05F 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2011).

Two female informants spoke about how people in the informal settlement were not ‘seen’ by Cape borners who were their neighbours, and how their children were chased out of play areas in this neighbourhood.

*Inf 1: [isiXhosa] We don’t have friendships. They don’t even want to see us.*

*Inf 2: [isiXhosa] It’s because we make things dirty, we burn, and the kids that go and play there get chased away. They come back bleeding here in Joe Slovo.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 12FF 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2011

Joe Slovo informants highlight a class and economic divide between urban homeowners and migrant shack dwellers:

*Inf 1: [isiXhosa]. We are not friends with those people*

*Inf 2: We don't greet each other ... We just pass because they... we (are) down, they are up.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 07MF 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2011

*They used to say we must not come closer to their houses to build the shacks because we will affect them with fire.*

Interview: Joe Slovo 10MF 10<sup>th</sup> December, 2011

Another informant (Interview: Joe Slovo 01F, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011) spoke about how there had been “a lot of fighting in meetings” over the proposed 70/30 split in the allocation of houses in the N2 Gateway between informal settlers and backyarders. This was an issue that generally evoked strong territorial and proprietary positions. Those informants in Joe Slovo whose migration trajectories had taken them into Langa prior to their move into the informal settlement tended to have more sympathy for the concerns of the owners of the suburban houses in Settlers. This may also reflect the presence of social ties there. The informant quoted below was one of the original Joe Slovo residents with a long history of living in Langa. Asked how to describe the relationship, one informant living close to the boundary between the two areas acknowledged the impact that the settlement had had on local property values

*Inf: ...the people are staying in Joe Slovo, they take the dirty water, and put it a drain in front of their house, so the value of that house is bad...So, you can think if that house of that lady are staying in Settlers (pointing to a nearby*

*house abutting the informal settlement) – it is your house, what can you think about that?*

Interview: Joe Slovo 17F 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2012

### **5.3.12 Perspectives from the informal settlement**

Overall the evidence from the interviews conducted across the informal settlement revealed Joe Slovo as a highly dynamic social space, loosely constructed around social networks. These incorporated migration trajectories which connected rural nodes in the Eastern Cape with the various Langa hostels over several generations before the emergence of the settlement in the early 1990s. Joe Slovo has subsequently provided an entry point for new entrants to the city as post-apartheid migration of work seekers has accelerated. Their modes of access trace social connections with rural sending areas which extend into Langa, which is a prized destination due to its proximity to work opportunities and the accessibility and relative affordability of transport.

Within Langa the residents of the informal settlement are relegated to the social and spatial fringe of the township. Several settlement residents report a period of living in the hostels and continuing social linkages with contemporary hostel dwellers – themselves historically socially marginal. The majority of informants interviewed retain linkages with their rural homesteads and origins, albeit with varying degrees of closeness and continuing social and material investment.

Joe Slovo settlement is shown to contain discrete micro locales in which multiple voices vie to be heard and stake claims for recognition as representatives of ‘the community’. Over the period under study a wide range of committees and organisations have risen and declined within the settlement, each with particular geographic and social footprints. Leaderships in these organisations have forged alliances with a variety of external non-state and state actors. As noted in Chapter 4,

the original model of managed consultation, where local representatives met with City and other officials in “invited spaces”, was replaced for a period by the rise of local organisations which acted independently to protect access to Langa and advance a new agenda in a bid to make the state “come closer”. However this insurgent energy was once again incorporated within the legally prescribed processes of “meaningful engagement” and the mandatory establishment of a steering committee.

Informant narratives reveal the contingent and strategic nature of rationalities of people living in conditions of informality. Stretched families reliant on ties – some weak and others stronger – attempt to straddle urban and rural space and must confront and manage the absence of certainty about the future on a daily basis. For some the motif of “the brick house” is the indicator of security for their children and safety from fire. For others who are deemed to be “non-qualifiers” the insertion of the N2 Gateway threatens them with displacement and, ironically, could undermine their livelihood security.

The future for those living in the informal settlement is fragile and contingent, quickly redrawn by the presence or absence of work, the passage of fire, the threat of displacement and relocation, and the choice of alignment with local intermediaries with influence to access a unit in the development. It is this combination of contingency, fluidity, vulnerability and risk which creates the prime drivers of the rationality of informality and shapes the micropolitics of space and place. The constantly changing balance and relative weightings amongst these factors influence the direction and focus of individual and collective strategies of struggle in the constant fight to survive and thrive.

## 5.4. Cluster 1b: Narratives from the hostels

Interviews with hostel residents in different hostel settings provided perspectives on the N2 Gateway and Joe Slovo from the outside looking in. These largely confirmed that there is affinity in the shared histories of migration and social exclusion which link broad categories of *amagoduka* across urban and rural spaces. However these interviews caution against overplaying the depth of these historical and contemporary linkages, as the conversations identified sharp place-based conflicts of interest and increasing internal differentiation amongst hostel dwellers. This reflects the changing gender and age composition within the hostel blocks, where young rural migrants try to capture space and clash with longstanding migrant families with intergenerational claims to individual rooms in certain blocks. The latter represent a new generations of Langa hostel borners who seek legal security of tenure in upgraded buildings.

The interviews reveal complex histories of movement from the hostels to the informal settlement. Some people moved voluntarily in response to overcrowding, a need for privacy and more social independence. Younger men sought to escape the social controls of their elders. Interviews also provided insights into how people could move back again as they balanced their needs for privacy with concerns about safety and security. (Interview: Hostels 01M, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2011).

Others were displaced involuntarily by fire or through hostel upgrading programmes, which frequently entailed some measure of de-densification. An informant recounted how despite being up to date with his bed rent:

*“Now people they came with the statement that ‘we can’t cater for someone who is not married’ – the house (hostel upgrading) will cater for those that are married.*

Interview: Langa Grey Hostels 01M, 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012



Hostel narratives revealed rising conflicts of interest between young rural migrants and long-term hostel residents. The young migrants' focus was on making and saving money. They were prepared to tolerate hardships within run-down hostel blocks because they feared that they would be displaced if the blocks were to be upgraded. An informant who was a third-generation hostel dweller singled out the role of recently arrived rural migrants in preventing upgrading and redevelopment from taking place:

*[These] people have resisted this with force. They do not want development... They say that we won't move [from] here, we won't allow that. Ai, for that matter [they say] we don't need houses because we have, their own homes in the Transkei. We are here just to work.*

Interview: Langa Hostels 04M, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011

This intergenerational clash around entitlements to space and place features in other interviews and across different settings in Langa (Interview: Langa Hostels 05F, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011). Interviews with hostel residents also highlighted what they perceived as the divisive outcomes of the state's dominant focus in the N2 Gateway.

*Langa... doesn't consist of only Joe Slovo. The only focus of the people, of, of government people, they are only focused about the Joe Slovo 1. Firstly yes, there's a lot of poverty even in Langa but they only think the poverty is amongst the people who are staying in the shacks, of which we are also in the poverty.*

Interview: Langa Hostels 06F, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Overall the conversations in the hostels indicated the historical continuities in the criss-cross of connections between migrant families, linking a base map of rural localities to their urban overlays that comprise diverse and distinct urban microspaces in widely different hostel settings which are each intricately blended with or connected to informality. As will be examined below, the complexities

inherent in these linkage and relationships pose immense challenges to the apparatus associated with the 'will to govern and improve'. Where these seek to impose legibility through a singular focus on projects like the N2 Gateway they seem guaranteed to generate unintended consequences and a backlash of contestations.

## **5.5. Cluster 1c: Narratives from the Intersite TRA**

The Intersite TRA within Langa, which is adjacent to Joe Slovo, is possibly best understood as a "zone of indistinction" (Agamben, 1998) – a crossover space fusing people displaced by the 2005 fire in Joe Slovo and also from single-storey hostel blocks in Zone 25, an area also containing shacks abutting the buildings or on the vacant ground between. Subsequently the Intersite TRA has also housed people moved to make way for new phases of N2 Gateway construction.

Interviews conducted in the Intersite TRA and the Iskwatini hostel revealed how successive waves of displacement had generated new micropolitical agendas and molecular strategies of struggle within the transit camp. Narratives also revealed how the N2 Gateway had become focused on the delivery of buildings, while largely ignoring the identities of those people who would occupy these structures. This focus on construction to the exclusion of tenure rights resulted in the weakening, or even erasure, of the claims on space and place in the informal settlement of those who had been displaced by successive cycles of disaster and development.

Interviews suggested that the more distant the location of the place of displacement, the weaker the claim of a right to return. Those initially displaced to Delft quickly lost their voice and as one observer in Langa described it, even people moved to Intersite were soon "regarded as other people, not Joe Slovo people anymore" (Interview: Settlers 03M, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2011).

Interviews highlighted how the pursuit of claims on space and place frequently involved the "othering" of counter-claimants and the discounting of their legitimacy.

However, once in the Intersite TRA, people from Joe Slovo clung to their place-based identities as did those displaced from the Zones. These TRA occupants started off by being highly visible to the state – documented and numbered, subject to oversight and management. But the combination of the passing of time, (many of the informants interviewed had lived in the TRA for seven years) and the changing locus of responsibility for TRA management meant that successive officials failed to keep track of changes on the ground. It became difficult to record how households split and multiplied over time, which increasingly blurred the legibility of TRA occupants.

The characterisation of the TRA as a zone of indistinction was further amplified by the turnover within sections of its population. An official observed how “a lot of the fire victims have already been taken out of those units and put into the new N2 Gateway units but nothing has been done to protect the units as they have gone vacant” (Interview: CCT Officials 01M and 02M, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011).

This state-sanctioned informality further blurred the space, creating opportunities for the growth of a new informal space economy as rival social formations sought to influence allocations of formal housing as N2 Gateway units became available. These formations also sought to take control of TRA units as people were moved out.

This fragmentation and contestation was evident in the formation of various committees which “at different times have represented ‘victims of fire’ from the Zones, fire victims from Joe Slovo as well as people moved from Joe Slovo to make way for the construction of Phase 2” (Interview Intersite 01F, 19<sup>th</sup> November 2011).

Interviews made it clear that the TRA was a place of uncertainty where people waited, observed and tried to resist their further marginalisation and displacement. This often involved entering into flexible affiliations with individuals, local committees and social formations. Those who were better positioned and connected

sought to engage with the state through structures like the Project Steering Committee established as a requirement of the order of the Constitutional Court. Interviews showed that representatives remained active there for as long as they could see potential to access jobs in construction and influence allocations of dwellings within the TRA and the N2 Gateway. Where these “invited spaces” became dominated by other forces and yielded no tangible benefits they were abandoned in favour of endogenous “invented spaces” (Miraftab, 2004) which either challenged the legitimacy of externally constituted spaces of consultation, or sought to claim a better seat at the state table.

As the construction got under way in Phase 3 so movement in and out of the TRA increased, and with this the level of contestation rose sharply between rival groupings and committees claiming to represent the interests of the people living in the transit camp. With the appearance of a grouping calling itself “*Abahlali base Langa TRA*” associated with the national shack dwellers movement *Abahlali base Mjondolo*<sup>22</sup>, which was previously unrepresented in Langa, local micropolitics took on a new intensity. In July 2012 the Abahlali website ran the following story which highlights the complex alliances and contestations associated with the jockeying for position in the housing queue:

*Yesterday, Abahlali base Mjondolo youth took physical action to block the Housing Development Agency from moving residents of Joe Slovo Informal Settlement into Langa Temporary Relocation Area calling the process corrupt and at the expense of current residents of the TRA. The SANCO aligned TRA committee is selling TRA structures and houses with the tacit support of the HDA. Many of the current residents of the TRA have also been pushed off the*

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<sup>22</sup> Literally translated as ‘People living in shacks’ or the ‘Residents of shacks’ with the inference that shacks constitute people’s homes.

*housing lists and large-extended families are being counted as single families and therefore slated for eviction from the TRA once their relatives are allocated homes.*

(Abahlali baseLanga TRA, 2012a)

The contestations in the Intersite TRA suggest the competing logics associated with informality. The logic proposed by Abahlali is that informality embodies an underlying rationality and unwritten rules which require an understanding of the workings of poverty and vulnerability and recognition of how people acquire and hold rights in space – a logic that is not very dissimilar from the management of the common property regimes in tenure theory. This seems to propose that once these rights are recorded and local institutions developed, the relationships between people, land and informal dwellings can be stabilised and anchored in space as a foundation for subsequent upgrading and formalisation. The counter-logic suggests viewing informality as an open access regime which is not subject to rules or amenable to management and where claims on space and place are the markers of changing flows of power on the ground.

The Intersite interviews expose how different groupings amongst the poor see and encounter actors in the state and deploy particular strategies of struggle in their bids to survive and capture opportunities to thrive. Overall, however, the rationalities of the many actors in the camp are shaped by the shared priority of not losing the footholds which they still retain in well-located space. As indicated above, the ways in which they defend this position depend on very different strategies of struggle.

## **5.6. Reflections on Cluster 1 interview findings**

The interviews in Cluster 1 suggest that state attempts to impose a neat megaproject logic and instrumental rationality completely failed to read and interpret the counter-logics of informality and the dynamics of migration between Langa and the

Eastern Cape. The N2 Gateway failed to locate itself in relation to the history of migrancy and the intersections between the hostels, the informal settlement and subsequently the TRA. The interviews make clear how the focus on housing delivery became divorced from an understanding of the social topographies which shaped expectations about who should benefit. This created the certainty of conflict arising between the interests of informal settlement dwellers and those of Cape borners, whose perspectives are examined below.

## **5.7. Cluster 2: Cape border perspectives**

A major component of the contestations around the N2 Gateway has been the ways in which Langa borners perceive that the project has ignored and marginalised the needs of long-time Langa residents. Interviews with Cape borners – homeowners and backyarders – highlight the persistence of social and economic divisions within Langa, many of which draw on deeply encoded social attitudes formed over many years and which connect with the socialities portrayed by Wilson and Mafeje (1963) half a century ago. The conversations reported on below, which make no claim to representivity, reveal something of the segmentation of identities and rationalities within Langa and the ways in which social groupings have sight of each other and come to perceive the state. They help to further deconstruct the simplifications inherent in the concept of ‘community’ and reveal the deep differences which exist within it. Langa borners are themselves subject to hard-to-read stratifications formed out of an amalgam of family histories, political affiliations, relative wealth and complex circuits of power and influence.

## **5.8. Cluster 2a: Suburban Langa**

The development of suburban Langa is a relatively recent phenomenon, partly influenced by the countrywide thrust of big business towards the end of the apartheid era (and beyond) to promote the development of a propertied black

middle class with a growing stake in the economy who, it was presumed, would act on the basis of its class interests to deflect more radical agendas of the urban and rural poor. Black professionals who took out loans to build and purchase houses fronting the buffer strip which separated Langa from the N2 soon found themselves confronting the rapid proliferation of shacks constructed from the early 1990s, which in some instances were sited literally on their doorsteps. This saw the value of suburban houses fall dramatically; this, combined with the informal 'redlining' of the area by housing finance institutions, created a crisis for many homeowners and contributed to tense social relations already reflected in the findings of the Joe Slovo interviews discussed above. While the research seeks to delineate the "permanent provocation" between the will to govern and the strategies of local struggles to survive and thrive, the findings from this component suggest the need for recalibration. This will better enable a move beyond the implied binaries, to examine clashes *amongst* and *between* wills to survive and thrive.

One informant candidly narrated her sense of the material and cultural gulf inherent in the clash of values and attitudes between Settlers residents and shack dwellers from the Eastern Cape which had been exacerbated by what she described as the 'sandwiching' of her space by the growth of the informal settlement. Principally she was outraged at what she saw as the blatant disregard for law and social order which was contained within the rise of informality:

*They were imithetho<sup>23</sup> when we grew up. There was a law for us. We don't, we don't do those things – people from here...How can you just if you show a space there, and put (up) your own hokkie and make a fry<sup>24</sup>. You don't do that.*

Interview: Settlers 01F 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011

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<sup>23</sup> Xhosa term for laws or rules.

<sup>24</sup> Literally to start cooking and make yourself at home.

She described her encounters with women at communal taps installed not far from her house in a way which fuses particular social attitudes with economic concerns.

*Because you know I like I've got that skill of talking to people, I'd just say:  
Hullo mama – no man, water is so scarce, water is life, - in my language. Close  
the water! Because they will... they will do their washing and the water is just  
running the WHOLE day.*

Interview: Settlers 01F 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Another informant argued that the steep escalation in water bills in Settlers was the result of people in the informal settlement helping themselves. This had triggered calls for a boycott of service payments by homeowners because “no-one can live paying for someone else” (Interview: Settlers 03M, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2011). Informants were also concerned about the rise in crime in the area associated with the informal settlement:

*Inf: And then, they've got another understanding now that we are staying here  
– they think that you've got money – they steal from us. . . .We've got that  
problem and we are in safe place. But, because we are  
SANDWICHED...because even my son, like I said we are in a NICE place  
Settlers - we've got our space.*

Interview: Settlers 01F 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011

An informant recalled meetings organised by the homeowners to petition for the removal of the people in the informal settlement to formal housing elsewhere (Interview: Settlers 02M, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011). All informants acknowledged the historical social divide between Cape borners and *amagoduka* and several acknowledged that these prejudices and divisions had come to permeate all spheres of Langa society. Some Cape borners acknowledged what they saw as the “irrationality” of ingrown attitudes and positions which one informant characterised



as stifling local development and investment, pointing to infighting among middle class Cape borners and others with same class background who have lived in Langa for a long time but who were not born there.

*Inf: The fact that there are people who think that no, we are from here – we've got uh grandparents that have lived here. Who are you? . . . So now whenever there's any talk of some sort of progress and there's money involved, that's going to come to the community that divide, gets... blatantly, displayed... So it's unfortunately how it works and that's why Langa is one of the most stagnant of areas.*

Interview: Settlers 02M 23 October 2011

Several informants from among the Cape border grouping displayed a deep and nuanced understanding of Langa's history and the feuds which had developed around the insertion of the N2 Gateway. Cape border informants tell stories that demonstrate the intensely politicised nature of housing allocations and how these are considered to be engineered for local party political advantage. This, as one informant, pointed out had led to the increasing disenchantment of the poor as expressed in the recent emergence of more politically independent issue-led shack dweller formations. Conversations with Langa borners shed light on multiple micropolitical agendas with their roots in history and identity and how these feature in multiple bids to secure political and economic advantage in the broader township political theatre.

## **5.9. Cluster 2b: The Langa backyarders**

A focus group with Langa backyarders revealed attitudes and perspectives similar to those outlined above, but which were expressed in a simple and unambiguous message that the needs of the backyarders had consistently been ignored and overlooked. As the narratives were exchanged in the focus group, which comprised

largely older people, it was clear that the positions articulated here were well rehearsed and had been voiced many times before. Backyarders argued that while they have continually approached the state, its agents either did not 'see' them or refused to prioritise their issues. This generated deep frustrations and has had the effect of amplifying local contestation.

*But it's true that these things are painful. Where are our supporters? Why are these other people<sup>25</sup> more important than us? Why are we regarded as useless? We are not important. Nothing, nothing, nothing.*

Interview: Backyarders Focus Group, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Another informant – a Cape borner and former backyarder now living in a flat in the N2 Gateway – provided his perspective on the origins of the conflict between the Langa born backyarders and migrants in the informal settlement. One of these divisions stemmed from a historical conflict over land uses:

*Before they placed their shacks they took a land that was used by Cape Town borners. Because this land here, the whole, up to comprehensive Isilimela – it used to be a bush where we do our initiation things. But people from Transkei, Ciskei ... they came down to Cape Town, they just put in the shacks on the site.*

Interview: N2 Gateway Phase 1: 02M, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011

This was followed by conflict over who should benefit from the N2 Gateway:

*When we heard a decision about building this (N2 Gateway), it became a havoc and a toyi-toyi because the first people who, who were staying here in Cape Town, ... they were not referred houses. So those people were waiting for a long*

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<sup>25</sup> People in the informal settlement.

*time. And now somebody who just started a, a hok<sup>26</sup> here one year ago, he's a first priority to get a house. It created a fight among two sides.*

Interview: N2 Gateway Phase 1: 02M, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011

This was echoed by the concerns of people in the backyarder focus group where one of the crosscutting themes was the perception that young incomers from the informal settlement were getting access to houses while an older generation of adult backyarders and their families were excluded.

*That is why every time I talk to them I will say that I won't believe, I don't believe. The 18-year-old has got a house. The 19-year-old has got a house. The 21-year-olds have got houses [in the N2].*

Interview: Backyarders Focus Group, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2011

Backyarders express the same frustrations with the formal apparatus of politics and governmentality as emerge in the interviews with hostel dwellers and informants in the informal settlement. This constitutes a shared script which all social groupings within Langa read from which regards promises as the counterfeit currency of politics:

*They only know that when they need votes that is where they count that there are people who are backyarders. You will see that they will be flooding, coming to our meetings and coming with the promises. After you finish voting nobody cares about us. . . . Now the only thing that we hear from them is that they want to put toilets in the backyards. They think we don't want houses. They want us to stay where we are staying now until we don't know when.*

Interview: Backyarders Focus Group, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2011

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<sup>26</sup> A hok is a colloquial term for a shack.

The focus group discussion revealed elaborate readings of the state and the ploys and tactics of its agents in the exercise and defence of political and bureaucratic power which include inaction, selective amnesia and displacement. In this way they single out how *not acting* can become a statement of power and a means to defend the status quo. The backyarders highlighted how in the context of changing political administrations in the Western Cape incoming politicians and their advisers would disavow any knowledge or continued responsibility for what preceding administrations had done before:

*But every time when they change the person the new person says I don't know nothing about the backyarders. I didn't get anything on the table. How can they know nothing about the information of us?*

(ibid.)

The Langa backyarders provided insights into the many practices associated with the 'will to govern and improve' of the state and the ways in which these were designed to limit and deflect external challenges to the exercise of sovereign power, through employment of the many instruments available to bureaucratic and technical power.

## **5.10. Cluster 3: The view from within the N2 Gateway**

Thus far the research findings presented have focused on the perspectives of those in Langa who remained outside N2 Gateway looking in. The third and final cluster within the Langa narratives features those who have succeeded in accessing a housing unit in the N2 Gateway – either in the rental flats, the show houses or the ownership units provided in Phase 3a. Eight narratives, coupled with a review of documentary sources, help to examine the extent of the gap between the N2 Gateway vision and plan, and what was achieved, by exploring how those who have succeeded in entering the project see it from the inside.

### 5.10.1 Cluster 3a: N2 Gateway Phase 1 – Joe Slovo Park

Phase 1 experienced many problems, as examined in Chapter 4, with the HDA taking over management of the project from Thubelisha Homes. In practice the residents did not see much difference between Thubelisha and the HDA as many staff migrated from one institution to the other. Phase 1 was quickly mired in conflict as the new occupiers faced numerous problems with the build quality and launched a rent boycott. An Anti-Eviction Campaign (AEC) press release issued on behalf of the tenants' committee of the N2 Gateway Phase 1 Flats shows the public face of these discontents and the tenor of their encounters with representatives of the State:

*We are crying because we are being abused. We demand that our rents be normalised! We are sick and tired of being managed from Johannesburg. . . . We are being remote-controlled. We do not need or want Thubelisha, nor its replacement, the National Housing Agency. They must voetsak!<sup>27</sup> We are well capable of managing our own flats as a community. We demand a management system under our control!*

(AEC, 2009)

In-depth interviews with two well-placed key informants resident in the flats – one Langa borner and one 'outsider' set out to explore aspects of life on the inside of the N2 Gateway. These stories make no claim to generalise 'insider' or 'outsider' perspectives; issues arising from the interviews were further explored in subsequent conversations with officials and used to interrogate secondary data.

The 'outsider' was a former MK veteran<sup>28</sup> from Nyanga East who had moved into the flats in June 2007 and had lived there for just over four years at the time of the

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<sup>27</sup> Colloquial expression meaning to get lost or bugger off.

<sup>28</sup> MK is the commonly used shorthand for Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the ANC active during the struggle against apartheid.

interview. The informant described how in his eyes the flats were soon transformed from a place that initially seemed “glittering, very clean and very nice” into something “that to me and the other people that stay today (is) a white elephant”. This transformation was remarkably swift.

*The minute I came here ... the boycott was starting already. I remember I had less than two weeks when we were told that [laughter in voice] we should go to march. And I was so mesmerised as to what's going on, but there was a boycott already.*

Interview N2 Gateway Phase 1: 01M, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011

The informant argued that changes in the political landscape made no difference to the situation in the N2 Gateway:

*The Ministers have been here. The MECs have been here several times. All the politicians have been here...What is going on is disintegration. . .*

The first informant confirmed that sub-letting of flats had become the norm:

*Now at the same time from the end of the people, there are people who are greedy...who are benefitting from those flats. They rent them out as far as R2000 [for] a flat smaller than this one.<sup>29</sup> A flat as small as this one – R2000! That person [the lessor] is not paying for that. There's a rent boycott.*

Interview N2 Gateway Phase 1: 01M, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011

The lack of a social housing institution to manage the complex, with responsibility for repairs and maintenance, created a set of conditions favouring the emergence of opportunistic strategies involving the individual appropriation of the rentals owed to the state. Many of the original tenants moved out and sub-let the units, while actively maintaining the rent boycott in a not-so-quiet encroachment.

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<sup>29</sup> The official rental for a flat of equivalent size was R1105/month

*Inf: You see, those people that are renting flats out, are no longer staying here.*

*Q: Ja. But they are getting an income now from a government resource.*

*Inf: From other people, from government... They see nothing wrong, believe me.*

Interview N2 Gateway Phase 1: 01M, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011

The informant alluded to how *de facto* control of the flats – which he described as “a yard” was being taken over by people who he described as “heavy chiefs<sup>30</sup> – the self-made landlords” who sub-let units. He noted that where tenants failed to pay they would be forcibly evicted:

*“They come during the night when you are sleeping and... (Makes a whistling sound and hand gesture to mime forcible expulsion). Hey I think have changed about four neighbours here – same, same flat”*

(ibid.)

The second informant was from an established Cape border family and could trace the family history back to Ndabeni.<sup>31</sup> He had a 13-year history as an organiser with SANCO, establishing street committees in Langa. He described the tensions and divisions surfaced by Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway and his personal sense of unease that people from Langa were in such a minority on “their own land”. According to him people from Langa had been allocated between five and ten per cent of the flats.

*We’ve got people coming from Gugulethu, we’ve got people coming from Charlesville; we’ve got people coming from Bonteheuwel. That was a strategy*

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<sup>30</sup> ‘Chief’ in this instance is used colloquially as a reference to someone who wields power and has connections.

<sup>31</sup> Being able to trace one’s roots back to Ndabeni, the location closer to town from which people were removed to Langa, is regarded as a primary indicator of an established Cape border family.

*that was used. And you will find out that when you're sitting with these people, when they're talking, they are talking like they are the ones who are clever.*

Interview N2 Gateway Phase 1: 02M, 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2011

The informant alleged that the residents had given the committee a clear mandate to go and negotiate with the HDA and the government to fix all the problems in the flats and to negotiate a reduction in rentals so that people would start to pay again. However he said that leading individuals in the committee quickly abandoned this mandate, and that the remaining committee members had opted to keep the boycott alive in order to protect incomes derived from sub-letting the flats. These two interviews provide sobering perspectives on the unintended consequences arising from the implementation of Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway.

### **5.10.2 Cluster 3b: Narratives from the show houses**

The show houses are something of an anomaly in the N2 Gateway. They were constructed following a period of contestation about the future of the project. The freestanding individual dwellings constructed here are the only ones of their type, as thereafter the emphasis reverted to multi-storey denser settlement designs. There appears to have been some attempt to ensure allocations which placed people in the show houses from diverse settings, although the interviews suggest the opaque and haphazard nature of this process as seen from the perspectives of the informants.

Two of these conversations were with households that had been allocated houses after having been moved to TRAs – one at Intersite and the other at Delft. Both had been displaced by the 2005 fire. One informant had previously lived in the Zones while the other had been moved from Joe Slovo. Their narratives revealed the bare life of poverty and marginality and the persistent motif of the camp in South African development and planning history –where the displaced poor are be consigned to notionally 'temporary' areas until unseen agents and apparatuses of the state take



decisions that may enable their release. The narratives exposed the seemingly random nature of official decisions which deeply impacted on those interned. One informant described how he was the first person to be allocated one of the show houses and that he did not know where he was going until he was dropped outside the door.

*Inf: People came to me one day [in Delft] and asked me to pack my belongings and to put them outside and wait for the truck. That's all. I just got into the truck. I didn't know where I was going to but I was just told that I was going to the house. When it [the truck] got there I was just standing and I was lost, my mind was not functioning. ...when I got there they called my name. They said 4608 [Name] and I was told that here is your house.*

(Interview: Show house 03M, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2011)

Although he had lived for four years in the TRA the informant who ran a spaza<sup>32</sup> stated that he was not keen on the double storey unit he was allocated because there was no space downstairs from which to run his business. This had forced him to get a container which he used as his business premises.

A few doors away a middle-aged woman who stayed with her daughter, a university student and a young child, had been allocated a more spacious single-storey unit. The family were Cape borners, with their origins in a family house in a well-known street in old Langa. The unit, unlike those around it, had been fitted with a solid security gate and burglar bars at the new owner's expense. Both the security gate and front door to this unit were locked tight. The informant's housing journey had taken her from familiar and dense social spaces of old Langa into a new dwelling marooned uncertainly between the empty FNB Phase 2 houses to the west and the edge of Joe Slovo informal settlement to the east. Her narrative revealed the

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<sup>32</sup> A spaza is a small kiosk or tuck shop operated by an informal trader

parochial character of her old Langa world and her sense of vulnerability in this new environment:

*I was so shocked to hear that there are houses here, because I don't use this side... During the day I always lock the gate. If I was working I would cover up my yard, because I'm also not used to staying in [an] open air place.*

Interview: Langa Show Houses 02F, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2011

Two out the three informants reported that immediately after their arrival in the show houses they were confronted by angry residents from neighbouring Joe Slovo who accused them of buying the units from 'the committee'.<sup>33</sup> The police had to be called to prevent their forcible removals from the houses they had just been allocated. This was also something reported by other informants interviewed in Phase 3a.

### **5.10.3 Cluster 3c: Narratives from Phase 3a**

Three narratives were randomly sourced from residents who had recently been allocated double-storey units in Phase 3a. Informants had been in occupation for about a month when the interviews took place. Again these stories provide very different perspectives on the individual journeys people took via the rural areas, hostels and shacks to obtain formal housing. They also highlight very different perceptions of informants about the units which they had been allocated.

The first informant was a woman with a long history of association with the Joe Slovo Task Team. She anchored her narrative in the biblical discourse of deliverance, casting the Task Team as the Moses delivering their loyal supporters from affliction to the promised land of formal housing in the N2 Gateway. She began by narrating

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<sup>33</sup> Selling in this instance refers to paying money to committee members alleged to be working in collusion with officials in order to influence the housing allocations process.

the process of protest following the marginalisation of residents of Joe Slovo in Phases 1 and 2 of the project and the court actions which followed, before describing the day she moved into her new unit.

*Info: [IsiXhosa] We woke up early and washed on that day of the 17<sup>th</sup> and we gathered together our belongings. And we came here and we were happy . . . We had escaped being burned. We had escaped the fire in the night. We were very happy to come and stay here in the houses. . . .We were delivered. My children were now safe.*

Interview Phase 3 01F, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012

The informant was asked about the process of allocation and whether her former neighbours in Joe Slovo had also received units.

*Q: [isiXhosa] There were people who you were staying with before in Joe Slovo, your neighbours at the back front, left and right. Did they come with you and are they staying next door now?*

*Inf: [isiXhosa] [chuckles]. No. Not at all. We are alone.*

*Q: [isiXhosa]. There are none of your neighbours?*

*Inf: [isiXhosa]. No. None at all*

(ibid.)

In the ensuing conversation the informant indicated that the people selected for the units were mostly those that had been actively supporting the Task Team in its struggle to prevent the relocation of people from Joe Slovo to Delft.

The second informant – a married man with two small children – provided a more muted account of the transition from the shacks to his unit in the N2 Gateway, offering a very different perspective on the process of registration and allocation:

*Inf: [isiXhosa] We stayed at Joe Slovo. Then the houses were built. But there have been disputes about who should go in there as some people were not on the database. So they register and re-register and re-register before they build houses and they called people for different reasons. At the end there was a lot of confusion and people were not sure what they were signing for.*

Interview Phase 3 02M, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012

The informant also described how when they had moved in they had faced protests from others who had also been registered but who had not yet been allocated a unit.

*There are people who are saying that some people staying here have bought houses and they were not from Joe Slovo but they don't seem to bring us evidence of that – they make accusations.*

(ibid.)

In the conversation the informant stated that the local ANC councillor who lived in the informal settlement had been allocated a house in the N2 Gateway. Given that the remuneration<sup>34</sup> paid to councillors would have disqualified him from accessing a subsidy the informant suggested that the unit had been obtained through his wife, who was unemployed. The informant stated that several other members prominent in the Joe Slovo Task Team had been allocated houses and he said they had also been accused of allocating units to people that were “not supposed to be here” (ibid.).

An overt instance of people “not supposed to be there” emerged with the case of the Somalis who had apparently opened up a business in one of the new units, prompting protests and accusations about how they had obtained access. However the informant explained that when a former Joe Slovo resident had returned home to

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<sup>34</sup> From the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2012 a councillor earned a salary of R373,853/ annum with a phone allowance of R12,396/annum (CoGTA,2013) whereas subsidies are targeted at those early R42 000/ annum or less.

the Eastern Cape he sub-let his shack to Somalian nationals. Like other people in Joe Slovo he had completed the registration process to apply for a house in the N2 Gateway. When he heard that his name had been approved he returned to Langa to sign for the house and obtain the keys which he handed over to his tenants as the shack was about to be demolished. He then made his way back to the Eastern Cape and obtained a monthly rental from his new asset.

The third informant narrated her own personal struggle to get back on the allocation list after finding that her name had been arbitrarily removed. Her journey to occupy a unit in the N2 Gateway had been long. Originally from Ngcobo in the Eastern Cape she had arrived in Cape Town in 1989 to stay with her brother in the Zones. She had then moved into a bungalow in the backyards, returned to the Zones, before building a shack in the informal settlement in 1995. When asked about how she got from the informal settlement to the unit she now occupied, the informant laughed:

*Inf: Hey, [isiXhosa]...I got problems before I was able to get into the house. I was there in the first group to register but when I went to the office... my name was not there. But then there was a new list... The people who are playing this game were the committee. They were the people who were making everything mad by changing the names. I find a way but I had to fight at the office... People who came later are the ones who are speaking and turning the wheel. The others are left behind.*

Interview Phase 3 03F, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012

The informant found the flat to be cramped compared to her four roomed shack. She and five children stayed together in the unit which had two small upstairs bedrooms. She had already made structural alterations to the flat demolishing part of an internal wall to make place to fit her stove. She spoke of plans to extend the flat and put her bathroom outside even though the flats had been designed in such a

way to prevent this from happening. Her approach to the future was characterised by her statement that “this is my place I will do it myself”. The three informants considered in this section provided very different accounts of how they had accessed a unit in the development. In the first instance organisational loyalty and proximity to leadership seemed to have been rewarded and had been crafted into an eloquent narrative of struggle and deliverance. The second informant reported that he had not stayed in the informal settlement for long but had been allocated a flat. The third informant’s story highlighted the fight to avoid being marginalised in the allocations despite being a longstanding resident in the informal settlement. Although only recently moved in each occupant was already re-evaluating their future, and one had begun a course of informal alterations which could lead to a clash between her and the apparatus of the state. Read together these narratives suggest that the eradication of the informal and its replacement by schemes of improvement like the N2 Gateway were producing new terrains of struggle where the impulses driving informality could once again contest the rationality of the grid and the planned regulation of space – this time from within.

### **5.11. Interim reflections on the Langa cast and their interactions with agents of the state**

In the sections above the focus has been on the three clusters of Langa actors who appear on the revolving stage that is the N2 Gateway. In all of these narratives their sightings of agents of the state remain largely obscure. The agents appear, reading from different scripts, taking particulars and creating lists, occasionally calling meetings, colluding with some and ignoring others, mostly making promises only to disappear, but occasionally returning to dispense unexpected possibilities like prizes in a lottery. The largely invisible working of the state apparatus remain fundamentally mysterious and disguises the ways in which goods and services are dispensed, and requires particular literacies to decipher at different scales. Those

amongst the poor who have learnt to interpret its dialects and manipulate the prerequisites for disbursement are better positioned to engage with local functionaries. Those who can infiltrate the discourses and practices of the state improve the chances that their numbers will come up. Some just register on waiting lists and databases and hope for a favourable alignment of circumstances. At the same time increasing numbers of people report that they have lost faith of ever benefitting from state schemes of improvement and make their own alternative plans.

In Cluster 1a (section 5.4) those who have managed to retain a foothold in the informal settlement remain the central focus of the action around the N2 Gateway and have strong prospects – but no certainty – of being included in phases of the housing development under construction. Of these, there are some already ‘outed’ as ‘non-qualifiers’ who face the looming threat of displacement if they fail to engineer an alternative. Interviews reveal how every allocation is a source of tension and accusation as informal settlement dwellers and others seek ways to ensure that they are not marginalised and that they secure a unit. Although well organised and relatively united in resistance to exclusion from the development in 2007, Joe Slovo soon became divided as some people gained access to units in the N2 Gateway while others remained behind, contributing to vacuums of leadership and representation which became new zones of contestation.

The interviews clearly show how people in the informal settlement are linked through social ties and migration trajectories with those residing in the hostels, the actors of Cluster 1b (section 5.4), who in this drama are cast primarily as relatively remote ‘lookers on’. However closer scrutiny shows how hostels upgrading programmes (which largely took their own course in isolation from the N2 Gateway) frequently displaced younger unmarried hostel dwellers who then moved to the informal settlement. There is some evidence that this experience has contributed to a

backlash against upgrading in some of the hostels, as young single men with precarious places in the city act to protect themselves from the threat of displacement.

Cluster 1c, the Intersite TRA, presents voices from within a fragmented population combining refugees from fire and those displaced by construction. As time passes the strength of their claims on space and place in Joe Slovo and the Zones has been diluted by their prolonged stay as inmates of the camp, which also provides a new locus for transactions and manoeuvres around space and place, as the TRA inhabitants are forced to depend on the flawed apparatuses of the state or to pursue alternatives which increase their proximity to those with greater influence, connections and power to try and secure a place in the development.

In Cluster 2, Cape border residents from suburban Langa (Cluster 2a, section 5.8) and the backyarders (Cluster 2b, section 5.9) line up on the opposite side of the stage. The voices of homeowners are strongly supportive of the 'will to govern and improve' articulated by actors in the state, particularly where this involves eradication of the informal settlement as this will stabilise the investments they have made in housing while also offering some hope of a return to an older set of social rules. The backyarders, by contrast, largely view the N2 Gateway as a confirmation of their marginality and exclusion – where their position in space has become a metaphor for their place in society, somewhere behind and hidden from view. The backyarders fight for quotas in the development but frequently find themselves outmanoeuvred by larger political imperatives of more visible new 'delivery' and the opportunities this presents to capture the political constituency of the informal poor.

Those who have obtained places in the N2 Gateway (Cluster 3) also occupy uncertain and contested spaces. The disastrous Phase 1 (Cluster 3a, section 5.10.1), which sought to eradicate informality through providing social housing, appears to



have created a mutation, albeit within formally planned space. The acceleration of rent boycotts, followed by extensive sub-letting, released a rogue informality which has involved the private appropriation of state rental stock under cover of valid complaints about build quality and maintenance. Across all three phases of the N2 gateway informants occupying new housing stock face allegations that they acquired these units improperly.

Overall the interviews from the three clusters provide deep insights into the historical and contemporary social complexity of Langa and the many layers of contestation and unintended consequences unleashed by the N2 Gateway. The following sections of this chapter examine how state and trustee narratives intersect with and interpret these messy and conflicted realities.

## **5.12. State narratives**

This section mines the transcripts of interviews conducted with officials in various branches of the state and affiliated technical and managerial actors with diverse histories of engagement within Langa and the N2 Gateway. These cast light on the rationalities and practices associated with the 'will to govern and improve'. The informants provide diverse perspectives on the systems of governmentality and changing biopolitical orders. They reveal the complex workings of the apparatus and the interface between the technical and the political. Interviews are supported by the assembly and analysis of secondary data which allow further reflection on the nature and practices of the 'will to govern and improve' and address the related research questions.

State narratives are extraordinarily fragmented because, like a company, the state enjoys 'perpetual succession' which means that the profile of those who assume and relinquish power within its branches and institutions, and the alignments between them are in a constant state of flux. Table 4 below provides a snapshot of the

changing political landscape in Cape Town and the Western Cape for the period 2004–2012. What the chronology conceals are the continuities and changes within the apparatus of the state during this period. While the core of officials in the administration remained in post, there were often wholesale changes in senior management staff associated with major political shifts. These shifts impacted on institutional relations and set in motion new contestations, which mostly remained at a subterranean level, and informants demonstrate how an abrasive and peremptory attitude of a political ‘upper’ or ‘other’ could induce subtle, and sometimes overt institutional foot-dragging, through fine-print bureaucratic referrals aimed at quietly frustrating their progress and plans. Again and again the findings reveal the many fault lines and switches in political polarity that blurs the imaginary of the developmental state. These changes also impact on how the residents of Langa and Joe Slovo come to have sight of the state as discussed above.

**Table 4: The changing political landscape and the N2 Gateway**

Year	N2 Gateway	National	Provincial	City of Cape Town
2004	BNG Housing policy announced.	Lindiwe Sisulu becomes ANC Minister of Housing on 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2004, after previously serving as Minister of Intelligence.	Marius Fransman is ANC MEC for Local Government and Housing.	Nomaindia Mfeketo is the ANC Mayor of Cape Town.
2005	N2 Gateway launched and construction begins.  Cyberia appointed as first project manager.  M3 and Steercom formed.		ANC MEC Richard Dyantyi takes over the Local Government and Housing Portfolio.	
2006	City of Cape Town removed from N2 Gateway			The DA narrowly wins control of the City of Cape Town. Helen Zille is the

Year	N2 Gateway	National	Provincial	City of Cape Town
	management.  M3 disbanded.  Thubelisha Homes takes over management of N2 Gateway.			Mayor of Cape Town.
2007	Phase 1 flats completed and occupied.  Rent boycott commences.			
2008	Thubelisha Homes wound up.  Auditor-General publishes audit of Phase 1 of N2 Gateway.		ANC MEC for Local Government and Housing Richard Dyantyi is replaced. The portfolio is split into two and ANC MEC Whitey Jacobs takes over housing.	
2009	HDA established to take over from Thubelisha.  Constitutional Court ruling reserves 70% of BNG units in Langa for Joe Slovo.	Tokyo Sexwale succeeds Lindiwe Sisulu <sup>35</sup> as ANC Minister of Human Settlements.	Bonginkosi Madikizela takes over as DA MEC for Human Settlements.  Helen Zille elected DA Premier of the Western Cape.	Dan Plato takes over as DA Mayor.
2011	Construction commences on 2639 houses in 3 phases starting with 890 double-storey units in			Patricia de Lille takes over as DA Mayor.

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<sup>35</sup> President Jacob Zuma reappointed Lindiwe Sisulu as Minister of Human Settlements following national elections in 2014.

Year	N2 Gateway	National	Provincial	City of Cape Town
	Phase 3a.  Door-to-door verification in Zones 30, 32 and 31.  Relocations to TRA 5 and Intersite TRA.			
2012	356 houses allocated in Phase 3a by November.			

Policy and programmes framing state schemes of improvement have been articulated in different ways by a succession of apex Ministers and senior officials in the National Department of Housing, who exercise formal authority over policy and its alignment with programme implementation. These articulations and alignments are given effect in scores of different ways – through the media releases and speeches, website and social media postings, parliamentary briefings, responses to ministerial questions, budgets, annual reports and strategic plans, television and radio interviews, advertisements and billboards, sod-turning ceremonies and community walkabouts, together with the formal chairing of management structures which bring together other principals from the provincial and metropolitan spheres of government and their technical advisers to make and record decisions.

The public and visible articulations of policy are matched by unofficial scripts and off-the-record texts, both literal and figurative, which protect political image and professional reputation. The tensions between these narratives can cut through the carefully layered discourses of governmentality to expose uncertain spaces in the landscapes of practice, where local contestations over political control and networks of patronage interact with grand schemes of improvement. Here the narratives of

state actors expose institutional domains of contestation at least as complex and internecine as those ‘on the ground’ in Langa.

### **5.13. N2 Gateway policy and management narratives**

The findings highlight fundamental tensions amongst and between political and bureaucratic actors in the state. These tensions play out in complex and changing relationships between the National Department of Housing and its successor the Department of Human Settlements – each with their respective Ministers and entourage of officials and advisers – and their counterparts within the PGWC and the successive administrations of the CCT. Delineating the evolving relationships between these actors and probing the sources of narrative and counter-narrative has been both facilitated and constrained by the intense social and political contestation around the project. The investigation conducted by the Auditor-General, enquiries conducted by parliamentary committees and evidence assembled for court proceedings have provided rich sources of documentary evidence, but this has been offset by a corresponding reluctance of some officials to discuss the project.

#### **5.13.1 Ministerial narratives**

The Ministers of Housing and subsequently of Human Settlements have played a central role in the conceptualisation and direction of the N2 Gateway. Minister Sisulu featured prominently in Episodes 2 and 3 (Chapter 4) as the champion of the N2 Gateway in its design and initial implementation phases and in its subsequent contestation with residents. She also played a role in the scripting of Episode 4, mainly through the initiative to establish the HDA by statute. She has also featured prominently in the narratives of others. In her 2005 budget speech she located herself as part of the policy ‘tradition’ of the ANC and expressed the hope that this would continue undisrupted by those that followed after

However as the N2 Gateway process unfolded many voices were highly critical of the Minister, questioning the trajectory of this 'tradition' and attributing to her the characteristics she feared in her notional successor, as expressed in her 2005 budget speech. These criticisms came from within her own ranks as much as from without.

*Minister Lindiwe Sisulu had...an attitude that I don't where she came from with, but she was, she was like a boss. She wanted to tell people what needs to be done rather than doing things with people.*

Interview: Langa Councillor 02M 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012

A senior informal settlements specialist employed by the CCT noted that in the start-up phases "the N2 Gateway was then kind of ruled by Lindiwe Sisulu...nobody could argue against her". (Interview: CCT Official 06M, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2012). Other sources confirm the Minister's direct engagement with technical design, reporting instances where she required layout changes from the architects and issued instructions that some roofs on the N2 Gateway flats be painted red (SHF, 2006). Informants observed how the Minister sought to retain close personal control over the project issuing instructions to remove officials from project teams if she felt that they were not taking her direction.

Representatives of social formations such as the AEC were highly critical of the Minister's sovereign attitude in the distribution of benefits by the state:

*You know, she said: You're getting MY HOUSING, and, and you must be grateful to ME for these houses.*

Interview: Anti Eviction Campaign 01M, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Project management meetings provided the institutional space which surfaced the intense political contestations associated with the N2 megaproject. Records of their proceedings deal as much with the image management of project progress as with the actual *techné* of planning. Actors displayed acute awareness of the project as a

political vehicle and of how reports of success could bolster public perceptions of project efficiency and delivery, while delays, contestations and failure could damage and even destroy political reputations. M3 meetings record injunctions such as “minister does not want to see people in tents when parliament opens” ; in preparation for the Minister’s 2005 budget speech much emphasis was placed on ensuring “visible progress” as part of the “marketing and branding of the Joe Slovo site”(M3, 2007).

After the problematic first phase of the N2 Gateway was concluded there were intense contestations over the density and form of Phase 3 of the project, exacerbated by successive court actions over eviction proceedings. Thubelisha reported that conflicting instructions had been issued to N2 Gateway contractors:

*Since the appointment of the N2 Coordinator, PGWC has taken on a stronger role...This has involved them in working directly with Sobambisana to prepare a layout plan for achieving a higher density in the Joe Slovo 3 development which would provide 830 double storey row-house units. . . .The Minister has now indicated to Thubelisha that this is not acceptable and Thubelisha has instructed Sobambisana to revert to an earlier layout with 466 free-standing single storey houses. PGWC through their N2 Coordinator has indicated unhappiness with this . . . They consider it particularly problematic that they should get communication about the Minister’s decision from Thubelisha.*

(Thubelisha Homes, 2007a: n.p.)

The way in which the Minister countermanded the instructions of provincial government was seen as a breach of intergovernmental protocol by officials of the PGWC. The intergovernmental contestations also resulted in the cancellation of fees paid to Thubelisha by the PGWC. While the Minister was of the view that Thubelisha should be paid from monies transferred to the province by the National

Department of Housing, the PGWC countered that Thubelisha did not report to it and therefore could not be paid by it (ibid., 2007).

These instances illustrate the level of contestation between national and provincial political authorities and the bureaucratic and technical strategies of struggle within the state to direct planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway. These produce multiple split screen framings of the 'will to govern and improve' as expressed by different spheres of government.

Minister Sexwale features prominently in the later phases of the N2 Gateway following the court proceedings where he sought to re-establish the rationalities and *technique* of planning and intergovernmental relations. Soon after his appointment he visited the N2 Gateway and in a subsequent briefing to Parliament acknowledged some of the problems experienced in Phase 1 (PMG, 2010). He also explicitly acknowledged the social conflict generated by the N2 Gateway in Langa. In the light of the Constitutional Court judgment in the Joe Slovo matter Sexwale set out to mend political fences, promoting a return to an integrated approach in which he saw himself as working closely with Western Cape Premier Helen Zille and encouraging the CCT to become more involved.

### **5.13.2 M3 and Steercom**

Intergovernmental management arrangements for the N2 Gateway included the 'M3' apex committee of political principals chaired by the Minister and on which the MEC for the Provincial Department of Housing and the Mayor of the CCT were initially represented. 'Steercom', a committee which brought together officials from the three spheres of government together with the N2 Gateway project manager, dealt with technical matters and reported to the M3.

Early in Episode 2 these structures represented a fusion of political and technical rationality which gave great impetus to the 'will to govern and improve', which was



anchored in rapid delivery. One informant highlighted the dominant ethos of these committees:

*They didn't regard community participation as necessary at all, and they said, no, we're in a new era now...the government now know(s) what the people want – we don't want to waste any time, we're going to deliver... And I'd say, 'What about community participation?' They'd pat me on the back.*

Interview: CCT official 06M, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2012

This was confirmed by another informant who described how the N2 was immediately driven by “the political push to get this thing rolling, given the fact that there was never any genuine consultation with the communities at the earlier stage” (Interview: CCT Official 04M, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2011).

From an early stage officials responsible for project management became increasingly concerned about how this political impetus to ‘deliver’ was overwhelming planning and feasibility concerns. Steercom meeting records highlight concerns about officials not attending meetings or having to leave in mid-session to attend other meetings as they juggled priorities. An urgent need was identified to tighten up “corporate governance arrangements, performance requirements, reporting arrangements delegations etc” (Steercom, 2005).

Informants reported that they continued to operate in the knowledge that the timeframes set by their M3 principals were impossible. This led to the commissioning of interventions which were predestined for failure. A prominent example was the enumeration survey which was supposed to provide profiles of between 12,000 and 16,000 households which would be affected by the N2 Gateway. This was commissioned with a start date of 14<sup>th</sup> December 2004 and a completion date of 28<sup>th</sup> January 2005. Apart from other obvious feasibility constraints the plan did not appear to take into account that many of the households targeted by the

survey would have returned to the Eastern Cape for the year-end holidays. Meeting records show that unsurprisingly the service provider was unable to complete this task. Although data were eventually provided (which reportedly excluded data from Joe Slovo), Steercom found that the enumeration report could not be reconciled with the data received and could not serve as a beneficiary list.

Despite the failure of the enumeration M3 persisted in attempts to rescue it, pressuring Steercom to employ more people to recapture the data from original enumeration forms in a bid to clean the data – a questionable exercise given the concerns about the quality of the raw data received. The ‘cleaned data’ were then apparently used to extrapolate housing typologies, affordability levels and estimate the number of units. The abiding concern of politicians to secure ‘quick wins’ up front, in order to be seen to deliver housing, trumped all other considerations and sowed the seeds for the conflicts which would soon emerge.

Once the ANC lost political control of the CCT Helen Zille, the newly appointed DA Mayor, publicly criticised the N2 Gateway, describing it as a “poisoned chalice” (COHRE, 2009). This led to a breakdown in relations as the Minister secured the exit of the City from the project and disbanded the M3, leaving Steercom without principals to whom they should report. Project management responsibility was handed to Thubelisha and control over the project was firmly relocated with the National Minister.

Joint management structures have since been reinstituted following the Constitutional Court judgment in 2009, which required meaningful consultation with the Joe Slovo residents.

### **5.13.3 The City of Cape Town**

The CCT had long experience of working in the informal settlement prior to the advent of the N2 Gateway. Responsibilities for Joe Slovo in the pre-N2 Gateway era

were spread across different entities within the city administration, each with their own sectoral or functional priorities, responsibilities and budgets. These included Development Support, Disaster Management, Informal Settlement Management, and the Anti-Land Invasion Unit. Many of these units took a back seat once the N2 Gateway got under way and there is little evidence that the substantial experience they had accumulated from working in the settlement was taken into account in the planning and implementation of the project.

Officials from Development Support played a prominent role in initial attempts by the city to respond to the growth of the settlement, deliver services, reduce fire risk, identify and record people staying there. Interviews with two officials there provided important historical depth to the evolution of the settlement and its incorporation into the N2 Gateway. Those engineers or planners interviewed were particularly driven by the need to determine the layout and characteristics of space which they conceptualised as containers for people. Joe Slovo, like other informal settlements was off the grid and presented an immediate challenge in this regard. There were no existing maps and plans of the settlement which grew rapidly beyond the planners' gaze. Even after Joe Slovo came under professional scrutiny it continued to evade definition in the stable and settled manner demanded by technical rationality. It was not long before the technical rationalities of the state conflicted with the survivalist logic driving people to occupy the informal settlement. Space was at a premium, leading some people to settle under the electricity pylons. City officials and the public electricity utility company Eskom were concerned about the risks of people building here:

*Although we told them what the dangers were ah they were oblivious to it really. They know too because they see every year it happens. Low-lying areas get flooded in winter. In summer they move back in there. And it's a hard way of living and they accept their conditions. . . . They have got no other alternative*

*really...So we had to think of a different way to talk to the people, a different way of trying to keep them out of there.*

Interview: CCT Official 05M, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011

State strategy combined obtaining an interdict so the city could evict people if necessary, coupled with structural interventions which sanitised particular space through the location of tracks and the situation of toilets in an attempt to prevent people from living under the pylons. The insertion of a buffer zone between Joe Slovo and Settlers also formed part of the strategy to reduce the risk of social conflict. However despite the focus on technical solutions an official described how plans were progressively overwhelmed by rising densities in the settlement.

*Those shacks ... the shacks actually creep. They don't just put a new shack up. The shack is here, but you know the next day it is here. (Indicating expansion with his hands) And then they get another family member or friend from the Eastern Cape coming in ...and so it grows.*

Interview: CCT Official 05M, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Technical solutions quickly clashed with local politics and interests which officials struggled to understand or manage:

*Of course there's a lot of politics behind that. There is leadership there and there is money exchanged for a right to establish themselves there and so on. I won't go into that. I've never really tried to interfere with that much.*

Interview: CCT Official 05M, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011

The city tried various strategies to limit the numbers and regulate movement within the settlement, including the creation of a database to record current occupancy rights, on the assumption that this could be used for allocation purposes as part of a process of *in situ* upgrade. Initially some residents sought to avoid having their

particulars taken – a legacy of decades of the restrictions of the pass laws, where invisibility was central to continued access to the city. However for others this activity by the city helped to cement a sense of territory, where entry into the database represented the formal record of a claim on space and place in Langa. This perspective provides an important clue to the widespread nature of resistance when the implementation of the N2 Gateway later proceeded to override these claims. This activity highlighted complex collisions between the will to govern and the will to survive.

Informants reported that the technical challenge facing the state was to try and keep up with the fast-changing situation on the ground, but this soon proved to be logistically impossible and the database was handed over to the local councillor to maintain before being abandoned. However this quest for data about the population, intrinsic to the operations of governmentality, remained constant, and would reappear in different forms throughout the history of Joe Slovo, with each new attempt ending in failure.

The approach of the CCT following the 2000 fire was to pursue an *in situ* upgrade of the settlement. This preceded plans for the N2 Gateway and the BNG policy which advocated such an approach.

*In those days we talked about in situ upgrading because we realised from a holistic perspective that is not so easy for the city just to find new land and move people onto green land.*

Interview: CCT Official 05M, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011

The process of conducting an *in situ* upgrade required engagement with informal settlement residents. The informant described how the interface between the City and the ‘community’ had developed:

*They had a leadership group, a few leaders for... each area - there were three areas. And those were people who were elected but we don't get involved with that. We are far from that. They do their own thing. The councillor will also tell you these are the people.*

Interview: CCT Official 05M, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Officials – even those in the same unit – often provided very different perspectives and readings of events related to the upgrading process. While one official would emphasise the relative efficacy of the technical measures put in place to try to manage the situation, another would reveal the strategies of people to co-opt or evade enumeration to remain beyond the controls and gaze of the city. However as time passed there appeared to be increasing recognition of the importance of being recorded in the system – a particular feature of post-apartheid governmentality in that such registration opened the door to state benefits. An official described how “community leaders forced us into a corner to say that if two or three community leaders would vouch for and verify that person this person was indeed a member of the community, we should accept it” (Interview: CCT Official 07M, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2012).

Most officials preferred to operate remotely, meeting with a few leaders and avoiding participation in larger meetings unless absolutely necessary, a strategy which entrenched the power of settlement leadership.

*It is seldom that I will go and talk to the masses. If I do go with it is because of the technical and the leaders asked me to come with. And then it will be interpreted (into Xhosa) whatever I say. But I don't even know what they interpret.*

Interview: CCT Official 05M, 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011

An official noted that prior to the 2005 fire and the N2 Gateway the city was looking to build from the initial settlement replanning to upgrade the whole Joe Slovo strip

and formalise it (Interview: CCT Official 07M, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2012). It was his view that these plans to formalise the upgrade had been “literally hijacked” by the N2 Gateway. With the high profile of the N2 Gateway came the immediate recognition that the project could not proceed without some acknowledgement of housing needs of Langa as a whole. And it is here that the fault lines of the subsequent conflicts originate.

An official described how a public meeting was called to introduce the project which immediately went badly wrong. Officials spoke about the need to house the fire victims:

*So everything was the fire victims, fire victims, fire victims – until one lady, an old lady in Langa, a well-respected lady, very eloquent in English... [asked] a very sarcastic question saying: ‘Do you mean to tell me, Sirs, that you are looking to accommodate the people who have got property elsewhere in the Eastern Cape, where in December they are able to lock their shacks and go somewhere else for a month or so, whilst we the people of Langa who don’t have any alternative or anywhere else to go, must just sit and wait until they are formally accommodated?’ And the meeting [claps hands] erupted, everyone clapped – and, ja, there we were with egg on our faces.*

Interview CCT Official 07M, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2012

The 2005 fire features in all actor narratives as an epic and ground-shifting event. Responses to the fire reveal the shadow side of the will to improve and the ways in which the disaster became a source of hidden opportunity, both for those in government and those who are cast as the subjects of relief and eventual improvement:

*People were literally milking the system – from the community leaders, the City officials from Housing to Solid Waste, to Metro Police, Disaster Management,*

*Water and Sanitation, Sports and Recreation... Because why? They were claiming overtime. It was overtime pay that they were claiming.*

Interview CCT Official 07M, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2012

He described how the disaster situation dispensed with the usual tendering procedures, resulting in procurement of services at hugely inflated prices, often provided by people close to city officials and politicians. However eventually budget constraints caught up and the process was regarded as no longer sustainable or desirable by senior city officials who issued an instruction that the camp must go and people must be moved away from Langa to the TRAs (Interview: CCT Official 07M, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2012)

The final component of the post-2005 fire response involved the construction of the TRA in Langa. This created enormous conflict within Langa at the time. The official reports being confronted by angry protestors:

*So here's this load of people outside toyi-toying, they all want my blood. 'Mr [name] we will not allow you to bring these people in here. We're the people of Langa, Cape or Langa borners'. They want first preference.*

Interview: CCT Official 07M, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2012

A Disaster management official added further perspectives about the issues presented by Joe Slovo and the N2 Gateway. Disaster management advocated a three-pronged strategy to reduce risk and manage informal settlements:

*You have to have public education and awareness. You have to have structural de-densification when you provide infrastructural services and engineering services and you have to follow up with the third one which is enforcement. Now what we are saying is if you don't have enforcement and you can't follow up with the third approach whatever investment you've done with A and B or one and two falls flat.*



Interview: CCT Official 03M, 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2011

The official was keen to draw a distinction between the violent character of policing in the apartheid era and a new post-apartheid conception of “enforcement”. In the contemporary version “there has to be somebody who says you cannot build on a particular building line, or you cannot encroach there” (ibid.).

These interviews provide important insights into the workings of governmentality and the many “books” which officials read from and “practice bundles” that direct the workings of the state apparatus, almost all of which are designed to address particular practical problems of governance and improvement.

Other interviews with officials in Informal Settlement Management and the Anti-Land Invasion Unit highlight how the ‘will to govern and improve’ and the ‘will to survive and thrive’ should not be conceptualised as being constantly in conflict with one another. There are several instances where agendas of enforcement and control aligned to support and protect local claims on space and place. Officials reported on growing levels of cooperation between the Anti-Land Invasion Unit and the leadership in the informal settlement, and elsewhere in Langa, whom officials regarded as allies:

*We have got a good understanding with the community leadership of the zones in Langa. . . They would phone our 107 number and actually inform them that there is an illegal structure going up in Zone 23 or by the hostels.*

Interview: CCT Officials 01M and 02M, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011

In fact officials emphasise their dependence on local informants in order to be able to fulfil their functions.

*I have...to build very good relationships with community leaders because if you don't go that route you will get absolutely nowhere.*

Interview: CCT Officials 01M and 02M, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011

This cooperation extends the reach of the state which, as informants point out, is otherwise distinctly limited. This suggests that the 'will to survive and thrive' may combine strategies of collusion with those of deception and resistance. However this level of cooperation was far from uniform. In separate interviews officials reported experiencing ongoing problems of non-cooperation from a portion of the informal settlement located under the pylons where the local leadership was trying to build its base of influence within the settlement by infiltrating more people into illegally constructed shacks and then exerting political and strategic pressure to insert them onto waiting lists for the development.

Officials reported incidents where shack fires provided opportunities to displace people and dislodge their claims on space and place. This involved attacks on fire engines and the cutting of hoses to allow shack fires to burn out of control

(Interview: CCT official 01&02M, 8<sup>th</sup> September 2011) .

Officials speculated on the "murky" dimensions which the clash of wills to survive and thrive could assume in the informal settlement. They highlighted the inability of the state to plan to address informality:

*How can you do proper planning if this thing is just like a snowball? You're actually fighting a losing battle. The housing delivery rate is too slow to cope with what you have. They have allocated houses last year and this year to people who had been on the housing waiting list for 15 to 18 years... But the reality is that people are just streaming in.*

Interview: CCT Officials 01M& 02M, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2011

They noted how this inability this was further aggravated by political contestations within the state which were associated with the N2 Gateway.

#### 5.13.4 Councillors

Interviews with past and present councillors in Langa with responsibility for Joe Slovo and the N2 Gateway reveal the intensely complex relationships between elected councillors, officials and local organisational structures within the informal settlement.

The current ANC councillor, who had lived in the informal settlement, had been prominent in resistance to displacement prior to his election. He described how the rental flats had originally been prioritised for fire victims before suddenly “the language changed” as the flats proved to be unaffordable:

*There comes the problem now. . . . People were angry now -- up in arms. We strategise now how to fight back. We group ourselves now. There's nothing happening. Instead we are suffering. More and more and more of what they promised us is not happening. There's a new language now coming out from the mayor. That's why we invaded the N2 Freeway.*

Interview: Langa Councillor 01M, 13<sup>th</sup> September 2011

The previous councillor who was also ANC<sup>36</sup> alluded to the persistence of the Cape border – *amagoduka* divide in Langa:

*There's no social cohesion there. There is no integration. Some people who are supposed to be part of the family, in my opinion, and I'm referring to the hostels community, especially their kids and the informal settlement kids are treated by... the establishment as unwanted cousins at a funeral.*

Interview: Langa Councillor 02M 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012

He spoke candidly about the planning of the N2 Gateway: “What I can tell you is what you see here is not what was promised”. The councillor identified how very

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<sup>36</sup> He later defected to COPE, a breakaway faction of the ANC in the last part of his term of office.

early on the N2 Gateway faced fundamental problems – the affordability issue in relation to Phase 1 and the risk of conflict associated with accommodating some informal settlement residents and removing others. He described how in the early stages of planning for the N2 Gateway he had been allocated “a 1000 units” at Delft as a bargaining tool to enable him to negotiate with people in Joe Slovo who were willing to relocate there. He also provided his perspectives on the contestations between him and the young informal settlement leaders who were to form the Joe Slovo Task Team which he attributed to political and social differences.

*I would have meetings here with all kinds of people to negotiate the relocation process...and that's when I came across this [Task Team leader] and his brother. I did not know this guy's name but what I knew at the time was he was representing PAC. So everything I did in his eyes was wrong.*

Interview: Langa Councillor 02M 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012

He explained how the fact that he was not from the informal settlement but had grown up in the hostels was used to discredit him..

*They started spreading the rumour that Councillor [name] . . .because he's not from the informal settlement he does not understand the conditions of the informal settlement dwellers. For that reason we must cut ties, we must not work with him.*

Interview: Langa Councillor 02M 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Even though the research has shown close ties between hostel and informal settlement residents this suggests that the micropolitics of political and social difference are easily invoked in the molecular struggles over space and place.

The councillor provided another insight into a clash of rationalities – those which evoked ‘tradition’ and ‘culture’ drawing on a rural settlement idiom, which were contradicted by a ‘technical’, ‘modernising’ rationality based on the need to create

denser settlement on well-located land to redraw the post-apartheid city. He argued that the denser settlement double-storey design which had been adopted for Phase 3 contradicted the Constitutional Court directive for meaningful engagement and the original agreement reached between Provincial MEC and the residents:

*If there was a consultative process, how can people say we want a free-standing house...and suddenly you give them double storeys? Richard Dyantyi<sup>37</sup> used to say, 'I heard what you want; you said you wanted a house which is freestanding, where you could stay with your kids and your dogs in your own fence.' They wanted their own land because there are cultural things that people want to do. You can't do it in the sky, and you cannot take the cow up the stairs.*

Interview: Langa Councillor 02M 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012

### **5.13.5 Thubelisha Homes**

Given that Thubelisha had already long been disbanded when the research was undertaken, this section draws on “grey” literature and project reports augmented by interviews with key informants who previously worked there.

As noted in earlier sections Thubelisha Homes became an extension of national government and a lightning rod for intra government conflict and social contestation in Langa. It was hastily given an expanded mandate and thrust into the role of project manager of the N2 Gateway on the basis of a Ministerial letter dated 1<sup>st</sup> July 2006 (PMG, 2009b). Its original role had been to assist homeowners who had reneged on their bond payments to “right size” (Department of Human Settlements, 2012) and find more affordable accommodation. Thubelisha had no institutional experience of working with informal settlements or managing projects at the scale,

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<sup>37</sup> Former ANC MEC for Housing in the Western Cape

immediately prompting questions about how they could be expected to manage this megaproject which was already in disarray..

In February 2006 Thubelisha signed a MOA with the Provincial Department of Housing in the Western Cape which confirmed its appointment as Project Manager for the whole of the Project, including “the coordination, facilitation, synchronisation, budgeting and programming with the objective of ensuring that a coordinated, integrated end product is delivered” (PGWC, 2006: n.p.). It was tasked with the development and allocation of 21 300 dwelling units, of which 1 615 were to be social housing and the balance for ownership to be developed in Joe Slovo Phase 2, and other areas.

In addition it had to ensure that social infrastructure and services, emergency services and social development programmes were provided while also ensuring that “an array of Local Economic Development (LED) programmes and projects formulated, funded and in implementation, established in conjunction with the communities, the private sector and the three spheres of government and their agencies” (ibid.: 2006 n.p.). Finally it had to ensure that citizens would be “positively empowered to participate in the N2 Gateway Project and had regular access to adequate information to be positively involved in project decision making” (ibid.: 2006 n.p.).

Viewed simply from the perspective of technical rationality the MOA presented enormous obstacles. With the addition of all the institutional and political complexities within the Western Cape at that juncture, and the social complexities – not just within Langa, but in all the other areas for which Thubelisha was responsible – its future demise could be predicted with confidence.

By July 2006 Thubelisha found itself in an institutional vacuum. Steercom had been disbanded and the M3 was meeting without the Mayor. Thubelisha was instructed

by the Minister to report to MinMEC but apparently never received any documentation to this effect. It was under immense political pressure from the then National Department of Housing to get the project going, and issued instructions to the Sobambisana consortium to proceed with construction before receiving approvals from the PGWC. Province formally placed Thubelisha in breach of the MOA while the City threatened to withdraw its land from the project. A senior official contracted to the Western Cape administration characterised their predicament:

*Although contractually they reported to the Province, actually they reported to the Minister, and the Minister was the one who gave instructions. I said to the Province: You cannot accept responsibility for this project if you cannot manage it. So I put together that argument and persuaded the MEC to cancel the contract.*

Interview: PGWC 01M, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2012

From the 2006/2007 financial year Thubelisha started experiencing a funding shortfall from national government as its extended mandate did not receive Cabinet approval (PMG, 2009b).

Thubelisha reported that the 705 units constructed in Joe Slovo Phase 1 were started before the Social Housing Policy was prepared, and that certain aspects did not comply with existing procedures, requiring *post hoc* policy development. This meant that Thubelisha was not in a position to identify a social housing institution to manage the flats but it continued to launch “an extensive media campaign to identify potential tenants” (Thubelisha Homes, 2006b).

Thubelisha ignored the claims that Joe Slovo residents had to the land on which the Phase 1 flats were built. In March 2006 Thubelisha reported that it was identifying TRAs “for relocating residents from the informal settlement as quickly as possible”

(Thubelisha Homes, 2006d: n.p.). It estimated that about 3200 households occupied the remainder of Joe Slovo following the construction of the Phase 1 flats. This was problematic given that Thubelisha was discussing a proposal with FNB to develop half of the site for bonded gap housing.

By September Thubelisha faced institutional gridlock as the provincial government apparatus found ways to frustrate its work. It was unable to secure funding approvals because land availability agreement with CCT still had not been signed. Thubelisha recorded that “this had become an embarrassment as work is being carried out in accordance with National instructions, however Thubelisha is unable to make payment for work done” (Thubelisha Homes, 2006a: n.p.).

It reported serious challenges and non-cooperation from PGWC officials despite the fact that the Provincial Department of Local Government and Housing was still under ANC political control. This highlights the importance of distinguishing the practices of politics from the actual workings of the state apparatus where officials retain wide ranging powers to frustrate political intentions.

As things unravelled in the project Thubelisha convened an ‘N2 Gateway Problem Resolution Meeting’ attended by officials from Province and the City of Cape Town. The meeting provided a candid assessment of the failings surfaced by the pilot.

*The current cost versus densification does not address the needs of the poorest of the poor, e.g. many of the residents benefiting from the Joe Slovo rental units are not from Joe Slovo. Those who should be benefiting from the construction in their area are no longer suitable candidates due to rising costs.*

*Joe Slovo 1 represents the predominance of “product” and “place” over the needs and affordability of the people who were living there. By its definition the poor are excluded. The remaining questions are whether it offers value for*



*money, who would like to live there and whether the City can persuade any other organisation to manage the property on a viable and sustainable basis.*

(Thubelisha Homes, 2006c: n.p.)

By the end of the research period these questions have not been resolved. Frustrated project managers complained about the consequences of the political trumping the technical in the inception phase, arguing that “project managers must set the time frames” and not politicians noting that unrealistic timeframes were responsible for “the current disarray” (ibid: n.p.). Despite these problems the political imperative to place tenants in the flats prevailed. In July 2007 Thubelisha reported that all 705 rental units in Phase 1 of the project were occupied, but noted that it was preparing final notice letters to an unspecified number of defaulters indicating that it was planning to take steps to evict. An informant noted that this was never followed through:

*In all rental housing whether it's commercial or social or whatever ... when people stop paying rent the first thing you do is you throw them out – evict them. And everyone keeps on paying after that. And if you don't evict you are just going to look for trouble. And that's exactly what happened.*

Interview: Thubelisha Anon, 22 May 2011

By August 2007 Thubelisha reported that the rent boycott was gathering momentum and that they had collected R151 243 against R527, 425 invoiced (Thubelisha Homes, 2007b). Late in 2007 the Minister appointed a Task Team to address a range of problems which were deemed to be threatening the life of the project and which needed to be urgently addressed in order to salvage it. While this team made some headway in conceptualising what needed to be done differently, including reinstating relations between the three spheres of government, it was not able to salvage Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway. By January 2008 rental collections were down to

R85 353 “as the relationship with tenants has reached rock bottom as the staged rental boycott seem to be gathering more momentum” (Thubelisha Homes, 2008b: n.p.).

One of the final communications made by Thubelisha was in response to Parliamentary Question 103 of 2008 where it was asked to list constraints it had encountered in meeting the target dates on the N2 Gateway. The bitter frustration contained in the response was palpable:

*Other than land for the 10 000 – 15 000 units that is not yet secured, there are the normal constraints of low income housing projects and general construction projects: financial and bureaucratic delays, inadequate funding, invasions, protests, labour problems, skills shortages.*

(Thubelisha Homes, 2008a: n.p.)

By May 2008 Thubelisha Homes acknowledged that it was technically insolvent and its closure plan was accepted in September 2008, with implementation of the closure plan commencing in March 2009 aiming at final wind up on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009 (PMG, 2009b). The exit of Thubelisha marks the end of Episode 3.

### **5.13.6 The Housing Development Agency**

The formation of the HDA coincided with the Constitutional Court judgment in 2009 and the President Zuma’s reshuffle of housing ministers. This presaged a rethink of the approach to Phase 3 of the N2 Gateway, introduced in Episode 4 and consolidated in Episode 5 of the N2 Gateway development. However the HDA first had to try to rectify the problems in Joe Slovo Park, which had become more entrenched since the departure of Thubelisha. An informant from the HDA explained their role in Joe Slovo Park:

*The HDA is purely acting as project manager for the rectification of the project. Once that has been rectified and normalised it will then be handed to a social*

*housing institution for further management because it's not part of HDA's mandate to act as landlord...*

Interview: HDA 01M, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011

The HDA confirmed that the majority of the flats had since been sub-let and pointed to the difficulty in trying to rectify the flats as a result.

*We've done a survey to ascertain who is in the units because one of the major constraints in normalising the project is the huge amount of people who are subletting. The money is not being paid over. . . And basically those landlords that are generating good income would not like to see changes or conformity because that would mean loss of income.*

Interview: HDA 01M, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011

In 2009 the MEC for Human Settlements Bonginkosi Madikizela was reported as saying that “the reasons we have [for them] sub-letting is that the rent is too high” while the National Department noted that legality of sub-letting remained clouded with an official stating that “the regulations governing sub-letting were unclear” (Jooste, 2009) – an indicator that the state was not going to be drawn into further contestation which would result from attempts to evict non-paying tenants.

In January 2012 the HDA had announced a “new start” for Joe Slovo Park but the issues emerging out of the troubled Phase 1 of the programme had still to be effectively resolved. While it had to try and rectify Phase 1, the real emphasis of the HDA was on getting Phase 3 implemented – building units, managing relocations of people in shacks to TRAs, taking court action against those who refused to move and facilitating the allocation of units. Since the Constitution Court judgment more attention was paid to institutional arrangements, both within government and between it and “the community” in Joe Slovo and Langa.

*We as HDA have regular meetings with Province and the City of Cape Town. There is weekly reporting to province and the city on the progress on the site and then also once a month we have a Steercom meeting for the steering committee for the N2 Gateway project where now we also give input and feedback.*

Interview: HDA 01M, 27<sup>th</sup> September 2011

The HDA has also been responsible for establishing and liaising with a Langa Steering Committee established as a requirement of the Constitutional Court order. As discussed in Chapter 4 and corroborated by Langa informant narratives, this has been a site of contestation and a vehicle for influencing allocations.

The HDA's approach is summarised by its CEO

*It has been just over two years since the HDA became involved as project managers on the N2 Gateway. During this relatively short time the HDA has implemented some important measures in order to manage expectations, including improved communications, increased institutional ties, and most importantly expert project management capability.*

*A most important stakeholder is the existing communities and future beneficiaries of the project. Because the project always affects them intimately, good communication and involvement, through elected committees, is essential to the success of any project. The HDA has established project steering committees for each sub-project of the N2 Gateway project comprising ward councillors, community representatives, contractors and the HDA.*

(HDA, 2011: 2)

This provides a clear statement of the role of the technical expert and their bid to cast a net of 'expert neutrality' to contain the unruly politics of access to well-located land and associated housing development. It proposes that the expert offer of

“decent human settlements” can somehow filter out the contaminants of history, power and associated contestation.

*As the National Minister for Human Settlements said at the opening of Joe Slovo Phase 3, communities should make sure that the only agenda is to provide decent human settlements. No other agendas, personal or political, should be permitted.*

(HDA, 2011: 2)

While the HDA has been more practically successful than its predecessor in the exercise of expert managerial control and has considerably improved communication about the project in the public sphere, it has not been able to escape the intense contestation associated with the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway and numerous allegations of collusion between HDA employees and local social brokers to influence allocations in Phase 3 and the Intersite TRA (Abahlali baseLanga TRA, 2012a; Abahlali baseLanga TRA, 2012b; Luhanga, 2013).

Neither has it been able to elude the trade-offs entailed in the continuing predominance of affordability and its relationship with “product” and “place” over the needs of the people who come to occupy these spaces. The concerns of some informants interviewed in late 2012, a few weeks after moving into the new Phase 3 units, suggest that these may escalate as time passes.

## **5.14. Trustee narratives**

This section on the role of trustees seeks to explore the intersections between the narratives of the state, the orbiting trustees and the residents of Langa in the informal settlement and associated settings. Many NGOs have worked in Joe Slovo – the majority of these are organisations which have provided humanitarian aid in response to fire and flood events. Others support crèches, education and health activities while some have played a direct role in relation to the N2 Gateway and the

contestations around it. The Development Action Group (DAG) conducted research (DAG, 2007) on the effects of relocation to Delft which the HDA (2011) subsequently argued influenced the arguments for an *in situ* upgrade in Joe Slovo. This research was also taken up in subsequent investigations (COHRE, 2009) which prompted a rethink of the specifications for TRA construction and levels of service as specified in the 2009 Constitutional Court judgment. The Legal Resources Centre was engaged to defend Joe Slovo residents against eviction and argue their case in the Constitutional Court. The AEC has provided support to the Joe Slovo Task Team and the Tenants Committee of the flats in Joe Slovo Park. It has loose links with Abahlali base Mjondolo.

These NGOs can be sharply critical of one another. The AEC is sharply critical of the SDI agenda. Podlashuc (2011: 1), in a paper posted on the AEC website, argues that the SDI advocates “bootstrap development” which “co-opts the tools and vocabulary of the Left to carry out the economic project of the Right”. However in its search for what it perceives to be the authentic social forces of the Left, the AEC has on occasion found itself aligned with those who employ radical rhetoric as a cover for militant self-interest.

Complex dynamics have played themselves out in Joe Slovo, particularly in the relationship, explored below, between SDI Alliance affiliates in their role as trustees and the Task Team.

#### **5.14.1 SA SDI alliance narratives**

A range of organisations associated with Shack Dwellers International (SDI) have been active in Joe Slovo over a period of time. These include the Federation of the Urban Poor (FEDUP), the Informal Settlements Network (ISN) and their support satellites like the Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC) and Ikhayalami.

In October 2007 CORC supported FEDUP to try and set up savings schemes in Joe Slovo. This initiative received a hostile reception from the Task Team, which had just organised the N2 occupation and was facing eviction proceedings. According to CORC informants, FEDUP organisers “were threatened with being burnt in a shack because they were perceived to be threatening local power figures” (Interview: CORC 01M, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010). FEDUP was seen to be advocating for new structures which could become alternative centres of organisation. “Members of the Task Team were hostile to the Federation and the savings scheme initiative. They had heard that the Federation were puppets of the State and were connected with Sisulu” (Interview: CORC 02F, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010).

FEDUP members subsequently withdrew from the settlement again but later the SDI Alliance found a new avenue for involvement in Joe Slovo, in response to a fire disaster in the settlement in February 2008. SDI affiliate Ikhayalami offered support after the fire with an offer to block out and provide 10 shelters. It was at this time that CORC started to develop stronger relationships with the Task Team leadership, one of whom they subsequently employed.

“There was a long period where trust had to be built. The Task Team was not partial to CORC initially. There were differences of approach”. (Interview: CORC 02F, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010). The Task Team “worked within a rights based approach” which involved resistance and mass action while CORC opted for “a precedent setting action based approach” which was premised on opening lines of communication with those holding power in the state. (Interview: CORC 02F, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010).

CORC’s revised entry strategy into Joe Slovo was that they must “pass through the hierarchy of existing authority in engaging with the community” (Interview: CORC 01M, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010). This meant that they worked primarily with the Task Team. CORC recognised that “they might not have 100% support, but hold the majority of support” due to a “dextrous campaign around the court case” (Interview: CORC

02F, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010). However as CORC started to work in Joe Slovo, they came to recognise that there was “a breakaway faction settled in Zone 30 along Vanguard Drive” (Interview: CORC 01M, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010).

In this contested context CORC informants characterised their approach as to act as “a neutral member and to share information” (Interview: CORC 01M, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010). Following the blocking out interventions, self-enumeration became the focus of CORC’s involvement in Joe Slovo. One ISN informant argued in favour of self-enumeration as a basis for engagement with government:

*They did not know that this platform (enumeration) can open their minds instead of burning tyres. This is Option 2 rather than burning tyres. Now Joe Slovo residents know their position. Before they were victims of being relocated to Delft. Now Province is paying more attention to getting houses, instead of putting people into a truck and dumping them somewhere.*

(Interview: ISN 01M, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

CORC’s perspective at the time was that the survey also “laid the foundation for legitimating the broader network” of organisations affiliated to SDI. (Interview: CORC 02F, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010). However from the Task Team perspective the survey was solely to help them advance their demands for housing and jobs:

*We want all to be housed. No-one must go. Unemployment is high. We want jobs through the construction process as bricklayers, plasterers and labourers. We don’t mind about flats but we all want housing.*

(Interview: Task Team 01M 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010)

In part the Task Team’s decision to go with the survey was shaped by the context of legal struggle and the court action to evict the residents. The survey came to be seen as part of a strategy of self-defence. “This activity (self-enumeration) helps the



community more when there is a crisis in that community” (Interview: CORC 01M, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2010).

However several people in the informal settlement were hesitant about disclosing income and providing their ID numbers as this would enable Province to run housing database subsidy checks to identify people who did not qualify, either because they already had a subsidised house elsewhere or earned more than the subsidy threshold. This would probably mean that they would be relocated to a TRA in Delft.

Resistance to the enumeration was also reported from rival structures in Vanguard Drive. As noted by the City, leadership in this area were hostile to all external interventions. An ISN respondent attributed this resistance to “politics (which) is making things difficult”. (Interview ISN 01M, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2010).

The enumeration process confirmed the micropolitics of struggle and division amongst the Joe Slovo residents. The survey data have subsequently been used by Province to identify different categories of ‘non-qualifiers’ and the question still remains about how to address their situation. This created the danger that while self-enumeration provided important information about settlement inhabitants, it also provided the vehicle to marginalise and displace those such as the man and his wife whose story prefaces this chapter for whom informality on well-located land was a key factor in securing their livelihoods in the city.

## **5.15. Conclusion**

This chapter has presented fine-grained narratives from a range of different actors indexed to the five episodes that form the chronology of planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway in Langa. The interviews traverse the diverse terrains in which Langa actors encounter the contesting rationales underpinning the

wills to govern and improve advanced by the different spheres of state and associated intermediaries.

The plethora of contending voices and perspectives presented here exposes the inadequacy of neat binaries which seek to aggregate the wills to survive and thrive of the 'poors' in Langa under the rubric of 'community' and submerge the practice of politics within the imaginary of a unified developmental state.

The chapter has illustrated the fundamentally elusive and internally contested nature of the state. Interviews and secondary sources illustrate how officials and politicians across different departments and spheres of government read and interpret their respective scripts, and how actors within Langa and the state intersect with numerous trustees who share in the imperative to govern and improve, and mediate state agendas with those of targeted actors within Langa. Collectively these narratives provide the basis for deconstructing the workings of governmentality and identifying the political, bureaucratic and juridical rationalities which shape the practices of power.

The theoretical significance emerging from this ensemble of diverse voices and their mutual encounters is explored in the next chapter, which analyses the findings and the contribution of the case to the generation of theory.

# Chapter 6

## ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

### 6.1. Introduction

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are closely linked. This chapter distils from the voices and narratives presented in Chapter 5 in order to systematically address five subsidiary research questions, drawing on the conceptual framework guiding the research enquiry which affords theoretically enabled ways of seeing. Together these research questions seek to clarify:

- the principal contestations over space, place and belonging in Langa amongst and between Langa borners and rural-urban migrants known as *amagoduka*;
- the principle strategies of struggle employed by groupings of the migrant poor to 'survive and thrive', and how these reflect their rationality;
- the different ways in which the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway in Langa has exposed the underlying rationalities shaping relations amongst and between state and non-state actors and impacted on social contestation within Langa;
- how the case of the N2 Gateway illuminates and extends the concepts of "conflicting rationalities" and "deep difference" as elaborated by Watson (2003, 2006);
- how the contestations surfaced by the N2 Gateway reveal the "permanent provocation", oscillations and reversals along "the frontier for the relationship of power" (Foucault, 1982) between the expressions of the 'will to govern and improve' of the state and its intermediaries and of local struggles 'to survive and thrive'.

The analysis that emerges from discussion of these questions in the following sections provides the platform from which to address the central and retroductive research questions in Chapter 7. These precipitate the overall theoretical significance of the case and provide the basis on which to contribute fresh perspectives and new knowledge in order to write back to and enlarge aspects of the overarching social and planning theory which informed the research approach.

## **6.2. Analysis of subsidiary research questions**

The five questions set out above are closely interlinked. The diverse voices and narratives which comprise the core findings presented in Chapter 5 illuminate these questions from every angle. In the following sections each question and its underlying assumptions are critically assessed in the light of these findings. The multiple voices and sources of evidence are synthesised to ensure the robustness of the findings and provide the basis for in-depth analysis.

### **6.2.1 What are the principal contestations over space, place and belonging in Langa amongst and between Langa borners and rural-urban migrants known as *amagoduka*?**

The empirical research exposed how the framing of this research question contained its own simplifications. It was at risk of homogenising Langa borners and essentialising the perceived social schism between them and the rural-urban migrants known as *amagoduka*. A close examination of the three clusters of Langa narratives presented in Chapter 5 reveals more complex formulations of identity and contestations over space, place and belonging and the ways in which these have been impacted upon by the insertion of the N2 Gateway. This has enabled a more granulated understanding of social relations which helps to better conceptualise social groupings, identify the ways in which they are internally differentiated and understand the multifaceted and dynamic nature of the contestations between them.

This in turn helps to illuminate the situated rationalities which drive their interactions.

Connections between space, place and belonging within Langa take on a variety of forms which are tightly interlinked. The conceptual framework presented in Chapter 2 draws on Bank (2011) and his insightful reflections on the meanings and interpretations of space in his study of Duncan Village. He highlighted the distinctions between “space” and “place” as advanced by Harrison and Dourish (1996) and Kolb’s (2008) delineation of “dense” and “diluted” spaces which have proved invaluable in revealing topologies of contestation in Langa. The empirical research identifies different strata of Langa borers whose place claims reflect a range of dense social and spatial entitlements associated with diverse histories of urban belonging. It reveals a continuum that differentiates these borers from established and new migrants who advance place and space claims in a variety of hostel and informal settings. Many of those in the shacklands struggle to enforce more tenuous claims on diluted urban space as a prerequisite for bare survival. Their narratives illustrate the instability of life in these settings, the ever-present threat of fire and the associated risk of displacement, threats to the safety to children, the shame of bucket toilets, the disparaging social attitudes of many neighbouring residents which persist towards migrants, random acts of violence, the frequency of enforced moves, continuing rural-urban mobilities of various frequencies and intensities, together with the unpredictable presence of a seemingly arbitrary and often partisan state. In this setting claims on space are strategic, emphasising the affordances of location, the proximity of home mates, the availability of livelihood opportunities, proximity to health care and functioning schools, and opportunities for relative privacy and independence which have particular gender and age dynamics. At the same time ways of keeping the cost of living and working in the city as low as possible are key priorities. For migrants, savings effected in the urban

domain enlarge the possibilities of 'home' and retention of associated social meaning that frequently remains bound up with rural places of origin.

Between these two poles, represented by suburban Langa borers and the increasingly differentiated character of the *amagoduka*, lies a fuzzy middle ground. This contains backyarders with strong Cape borer identities as well as longstanding migrant families, some of whom claim intergenerational occupation of hostel units yet continue to retain rural links of different strengths. The middle ground also contains urban 'outsiders' from elsewhere in the city and longstanding informal settlement dwellers with weak or lapsed rural ties. The frontiers of this indeterminate territory have been expanded by the N2 Gateway, which is changing the spatial and social form of the township as it settles new occupiers into the rental and ownership units, bringing together people who come from the informal settlement, the backyards in Langa and other townships in the city.

The empirical evidence presented in Chapter 5 shows how each phase of the N2 Gateway has been associated with a multi-layered contestation. Many flats have been hijacked and appropriated for sub-letting. Those allocated housing units have been confronted by others who contest their right to occupy. The different phases of the project have surfaced and crystallised latent social divisions and created new social fault lines as they redraw the landscape, displace people and reallocate claims on space. The intense social complexity within Langa illuminated by this case study defies neat generalisations about township and migrant socialities, and highlights the variegated contestations over space, place and belonging as vacant space has been transformed by informal infill and redrawn once again by formal development.

### ***Langa borers***

Notionally the identity of Cape borers is formed by their immersion in what have become dense urban spaces with rich histories and close networks of social

affiliations. However, as indicated above the social identity of Langa borners is increasingly fragmented. Its history forms part of a much larger story of social differentiation and stratification which reaches back to the different responses of accommodation and resistance in Xhosa society to colonial conquest in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some aspects of Cape border identity originate in the foundational discourses about the identification of a 'better class of natives' in the form of Christianised and mission-educated urban elites. Historical sources indicate that Langa borners have never constituted a homogeneous grouping (as elaborated in Appendix 2) and the research highlights fine-grained hierarchies of differentiation currently present amongst them which suggest that contemporary social strata and social relations are determined through a complex equation combining material position, locality within the township and genealogies of belonging in Langa. Those 'true borners' who come from families with long histories of intergenerational belonging and the ability to trace their urban roots back to Ndabeni, and who can add property, locational and material advantage to their lineage, form the core of a Langa urban elite.

Langa borners who lack many of these attributes — such as backyarders — occupy an uncertain space in this notional social hierarchy. Many backyarders are the descendants of the Langa urban class who have been unable to access formal housing. But there are also backyarders who have been assimilated from outside Langa and who remain on the social fringes of the Cape border universe. The empirical research has highlighted a strong sense of exclusion among the backyarders who fought to be allocated a quota of units in the N2 Gateway but who have largely been ignored by the development. This, along with the separate upgrading of the hostels, contributes to the erosion of their sense of place and belonging.

Factors shaping Cape born values and attitudes towards *amagoduka* also emerge through past histories of political struggle. These include episodes in the 1970s and 1980s in which there were violent clashes between Cape born township youth and hostel dwellers who (despite their own histories of rural resistance which had gained prominence in the 1960s) were regarded by many urban dwellers as fundamentally conservative and susceptible to manipulation by agents of the apartheid state.

### ***Amagoduka***

In the past distinctions between migrant workers and township residents were more clearly drawn. Historically the *amagoduka* were the class of rural migrant men who stayed in the hostels. As resistance to the system of migrant labour gained momentum, women were also accommodated in the hostels. In the early 1990s some hostel residents overflowed into the shacks in search of privacy, while other single unmarried men were displaced by hostel upgrading. They were quickly joined by successive waves of mainly young, single and predominantly male first-time migrants from the rural areas. In this way the *amagoduka* became spatially dispersed within Langa and more socially diffuse. The social hierarchies which were a feature of hostel life started to break down. Following the dismantling of influx control the identity of the *amagoduka* became more conceptually elusive. As with the Cape borners, the *amagoduka* interviewed for this study were also shown to be an increasingly fragmented and stratified social grouping. As noted above, some of the established and longstanding migrant families had retained access to rooms in better appointed older hostels which had been passed down the generations or in newly upgraded hostel units, giving rise to a new generation of Langa-born hostel dwellers. *Amagoduka* were also accommodated in shacks within various hostel precincts and in the informal settlement. The research identified backwards and forwards movement between the hostels and the informal settlement, and close connections with those from the same home area. This category is further blurred by



the inclusion of beneficiaries of hostel upgrading schemes or the N2 Gateway Phase 3, many of whom now have homes in both the urban and rural domains. Despite the increasingly fuzzy and transitional nature of rural-urban migrancy, the empirical research illustrates how the rise of informality and the insertion of the N2 Gateway reinvigorated old social distinctions between Cape borners and *amagoduka*, which became part of the framing of the contemporary contestations between urban insiders and migrant incomers over space, place and belonging.

### ***Contestations over space, place and belonging***

The analysis of the N2 Gateway in the context of Langa reveals fundamentally different readings of space and place and associated interpretations of belonging amongst and between groupings of Langa borners and *amagoduka*. At one level the narratives attest to the persistence of the historical bifurcation of township space and socialities which promote the belonging of some and accentuate the liminality of others. However the research findings also illustrate how this original binary has been blurred and reshaped by successive changes over time, which led to the territorial forms delimiting suburban township precincts, hostels and shacklands losing their clarity of definition and becoming increasingly fused and intertwined. Appendix 2 provides a more in-depth spatial genealogy of Langa which originated in the knocked-down 'garden city' vision of the original township, with its carefully specified mix of semi-detached row housing and freestanding units for the better-off which were socially and spatially distinct from the barracks and hostels erected to house the permanently itinerant. Over time the order of this grid was slowly overwhelmed by the infill of the informal. Initially the trajectory of this change remained concealed as space was informally appropriated and reassigned under the roofs of urban homes and migrant hostels. Rooms were sub-let and hostel beds were traded while 'visitors' were accommodated beyond the gaze of officialdom. This evokes Bayat's rendering of "quiet encroachment" (2000a) which, over time, segued

into loud and overt occupation as this upwelling of the informal assumed its contemporary spatial form. The chronology of aerial and satellite images provided in Appendix 1 attests to the progressive insertion of shacks into the backyards of houses occupied by Langa borners to accommodate urban residents without houses, while the erection of shacks on hostel precincts together with the emergence and growth of the freestanding settlement of Joe Slovo were occupied by new waves of rural migrants.

For many of the Cape borners interviewed these trends had come to symbolise the progressive subversion of the social and political orders embedded in the grid. The trends also suggest changing relationships amongst and between Langa borners and *amagoduka* in different settings. It is argued that while changes in the physical form of the township through the penetration of the informal have blurred some of the original socio-spatial distinctions, they have served to re-emphasise the micropolitics of social difference on a much finer scale. The differentiation amongst and between borners and migrants is triggered by competing claims on space which reflect deeper contestations about entitlement, place and belonging. As the informal has progressively interpenetrated and redrawn the formal within Langa, this has provoked myriad and intense contestations over space and place that are in turn markers of relative rights and claims of belonging. The first wave of informal settlers in the Langa buffer strip came to regard this as their territory by virtue of their occupation. Some presented a heroic pioneering imaginary to recount how the informal settlement was carved out of 'the bush'. A very different version is provided by those Langa borners interviewed who argued that the informal settlement was an intrusion into a 'no go' area utilised for the seclusion of urban *abakhwetha* initiates following circumcision and their transition into adulthood.

As the interviews with the Anti-Land Invasion officials indicate, shack dwellers and homeowners resorted to all sorts of measures to defend their access to space, ranging

from collusion with authorities to keep outsiders away to clandestine measures and deceptions to realise the opportunities presented by shack fires. Migrants drew on long histories of rural home area social networks to claim and secure space, but whatever stability they could create was undermined by the combination of fire and housing developments which reshaped space according to different rules.

The majority of the residents of the informal settlement interviewed for the case research frequently comprised “stretched households” (Spiegel et al., 1996) whose urban members occupied comparatively diluted spaces in a dynamic social terminus providing points of entry and exit to and from the city. But the study also revealed occupants of other *blended spaces* that were not yet “dense”, but neither were they “diluted” in the sense deployed by Bank (2011). The empirical research highlights a variety of these interstitial spaces which are an indicator of internal stratification within different socio-spatial categories. Migrant families who have occupied the same room for two or more generations in certain hostel blocks exemplify a new generation of Langa-born hostel residents that is emerging, with different relations to the city and the rural areas with which they retain some connection. The research also reveals significant differentiation among shack dwellers in the informal settlement. Some of the households interviewed occupied multi-room substantial dwellings. These were often people who reported having lived in Joe Slovo for between ten and twenty years. Some of these structures combined residential space with business ventures such as shebeens<sup>38</sup>, spazas and salons. There were also examples of people constructing places of worship adjacent to the dwelling in which they stayed. These blended spaces were rapidly assimilating the markers of density and place, yet many of their ‘non-qualifier’ occupants were threatened with displacement by the N2 Gateway.

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<sup>38</sup> A shebeen is an informal tavern selling liquor and sometimes food as well.

The bid by the state to reverse and eradicate the informal through the N2 Gateway's provision of rental flats and high-density units paid no heed to these social relations and claims on space and place or the ways in which the development would impact on them. This ushered in new waves of contestation. For many informal dwellers who saw themselves being marginalised by the development, their priority was to protect themselves from displacement. Others who were better placed and connected saw the N2 Gateway as an opportunity to transform their hold on diluted space in order to consolidate their footholds in the city and extend their reaches of belonging into the density of legitimised place.

State interventions through successive phases of the N2 Gateway served to amplify local contestations on a number of levels, primarily because they were unable to identify and respond to this social complexity. The research provides strong evidence of how Phase 1 provided a focal point for multilateral contestations over who should be entitled to access the rental units and who should be moved to make way for the development. Poorer occupants within the informal settlement could not afford the revised rentals and also stood to lose their claims on well-located space. This created new hostilities towards outsiders who were perceived to be taking housing opportunities away from those with histories and claims in Langa. There was intense conflict and resistance within the informal settlement over threatened removals and subsequent manoeuvring related to allocations of units in the new development. Langa backyarders interviewed strongly articulated their outrage that the N2 Gateway was catering for outsiders and allocating units to young people. Hostel dwellers complained that the focus on the N2 Gateway was diverting attention from their needs. Cape borners expressed anger at the devaluation of properties and concern about fire, crime and lack of safety, which they attributed to the upwelling of informality.

These contestations set apart those who stay in brick houses and the backyarders who claim an urban history from those resident in hostels, shacks and new housing units whose histories lie elsewhere. These fault lines are deeply social and shape the ways in which strata amongst the Langa borners and generations of *amagoduka* continue to imagine and see each other. They illustrate how localised contestations over space quickly segue into deeper struggles over social entitlement to place and belonging, which assume visible and invisible forms. They become visible in the formation and contestations between committees and informal organisational structures that claim to speak for particular constituencies and localities. Within the informal settlement, largely invisible rural-urban place-based affiliations provide the fine print for distributed social networks and repositories of meaning which connect shacks, hostels and rural sending areas. At the same time this influx of 'outsiders', the rapid expansion of informality in Langa and the proximity of informal space to formal place are perceived by the upper strata of Langa borners to be unravelling an older social order.

Within the informal settlement itself the nature of the social vectors shaping the settlement pattern, which partly mirror rural nodes, were largely ignored in the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway. These gave rise to different committees with particular spatial footprints and zones of allegiance, but the significance of these imprints remained unseen. Within these local social clusters there were also distinctions between those with long histories in the informal settlement and those who were more recent arrivals. For the majority of those interviewed their priorities were to escape the life of 'mud, shit and fire' in the informal settlement, but seldom at the cost of being displaced from Langa. The priority of most of these informal settlement residents was to maintain their foothold in well-located space. Few expressed any certainty about being able to access a unit

in the N2 Gateway development, despite being registered on the 'waiting list' which, while presented as a symbol of biopolitical order, offered little, if any, reassurance.

When people were moved to make way for construction in Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway they reported a clear sense that they were the rightful claimants to this land and that they were entitled to return after construction. This reflects diverse understandings of land and property rights in contemporary South Africa and the contestation between freehold and informal land-holding systems which draw on conceptions of occupancy rights within systems of communal tenure in rural areas – many of which have degraded into open access, where “land allocation is informal and has no official recognition” (Manona, 1998: 85). When the occupation rights of Joe Slovo residents were overridden it emphasised the precariousness of the claims on space and place of those who still remained in the informal settlement. This directly contributed to the increasing militancy with which people defended further marginalisation by successive phases of the N2 Gateway. It is also central to the fierce current contestation over allocations.

Overall there is little evidence to suggest that the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway gave any consideration to existing contestations around space, place and belonging in Langa or the ways in which these might be deepened or mitigated by the new development. By contrast the research highlights how virtually every phase of construction and allocation of houses has been subject to intense dispute. The Phase 1 flats were subject to several occupation attempts while they were still under construction by people from inside and outside Langa protesting their exclusion. People from Gugulethu, Nyanga and other areas who were eventually selected as tenants and allocated flats in Phase 1 were regarded by Langa residents – backyarders and informal settlement dwellers alike – as outsiders who had appropriated housing meant for Langa residents. Fire victims from the 2005 fire who were settled in the TRA at Intersite were met with hostility from Iskwatini Hostel

dwellers who had a claim on the land for an urgently needed upgrade project. Informants who had been allocated flats, show houses and Phase 3 units all spoke of hostility from people remaining in the informal settlement who claimed that they had been allocated the same units. In the show houses informants spoke of people trying to forcibly evict them.

Bank's characterisation of Duncan Village as "a single township that embodied many different places" (Bank, 2011: 15) with associated meanings and behaviours applies equally to Langa. The evidence highlights the deeply inscribed and fiercely contested nature of claims on space and place across all residential settings in Langa. These space claims and the precarious order that they represent have been subject to enormous disturbance as a consequence of the narrow project logic of the N2 Gateway, which inserted itself blindly into this volatile setting. Overall these contestations expose the unrealistic expectations of Habermasian planning theory about the possibility of collaborative planning in such settings.

### **6.2.2 What are the principle strategies of struggle employed by groupings of the migrant and informal poor to 'survive and thrive' and how are these a reflection of their rationality?**

The findings highlighted a bias in this research question towards the continued prevalence of rural circular migrants in the population of the informal settlement and the hostels. However as discussed in Chapter 5, while circular migrancy is certainly predominant amongst those interviewed, it cannot be said to be ubiquitous. Analysis of the findings suggests a possible continuum on which the residents of Joe Slovo range from being primarily members of urban households whose rural linkages have declined or are exhausted, through to being part of social structures populated by the urban emissaries of 'stretched' rural households. This suggests that *at both ends* of this continuum urban informality itself may be foundational for the

pursuit of strategies to survive and thrive which incur low overheads and which prioritise prime urban location above all else.

For some of the informants their “centre of gravity” (Cox and Hemson, 2008) had shifted and their way back to the rural areas was no longer clear, and in some instances no longer possible. The relative weaknesses and strengths of continuing rural ties suggest an emerging but still fuzzy distinction between what can be described as ‘condensed’ and ‘diffused’ strategies of struggle employed by different households in the informal settlement and elsewhere in Langa to survive and thrive. Both strategies are strongly reliant on the economic opportunities conferred by access to well-located space, yet often it is the presence of the social in that space which enables these opportunities to be realised. This is reflected in the relative strength or weakness of social ties and their distribution, which cement links to place and relative belonging.

For those whose strategies of struggle are locally compressed, the social ties and transactions at the heart of household livelihoods and wellbeing are increasingly localised and centred on securing an urban future which provides the locus for making meaning. Where strategies are more diffuse these straddle rural-urban boundaries. However in these instances centres of meaning and identity still reside primarily in the rural domain.

The narratives show how the migrant poor draw extensively on social networks transplanted from rural localities and the patronage opportunities which these contain. It is argued that the relative weakness or strength of intra-household linkages between urban and rural areas is a factor influencing strategic choices shaping struggles to survive and thrive. Amongst the informants in the informal settlement some of the most marginal households lacked the resources to maintain their rural homes and with them their sense of belonging. With their rural social connections virtually extinguished, their strategies of struggle to survive and thrive



had condensed within the informal settlement, which had become 'home'. The threat of relocation involved much more than loss of well-located space – it threatened to disrupt local social networks which provided critical sources of support. Their rationalities were shaped by adaptive strategies of bare survival and the need to distinguish opportunities from threats wherever these were presented. This could involve frequent switches between 'public transcripts' of submissive compliance, "hidden transcripts" of resistance (Scott, 1990), with flashes of militant clandestine or public protest that might combine with the active compliance of individuals with the requirements of governmentality and the biopolitical order, where this was seen to be of advantage. This could involve enrolling in systems of registration of whatever origin, in the hope of increasing the visibility of the plight of the household to enable it to be seen by the state. It could entail surreptitious collaboration with agents of the state to provide information about newcomers in the settlement perceived to be threatening a notional place in the housing development queue. It could involve numerous small deceptions as people sought to secure additional benefits in the aftermath of a fire. It could employ varieties of 'quiet encroachment' through the surreptitious addition of a room under the nose of the Anti-Land Invasion Unit, or tapping informally into a source of electricity. It could ignite in flashes of anger, frustration and resistance in order to protect claims on space and place. Many of these households were wholly dependent on their location in Joe Slovo to avoid further impoverishment and social marginalisation. And yet it was these marginal households which seemed particularly at risk of being displaced as a consequence of the N2 Gateway. They were heavily reliant on the formal allocation system to receive a house, as they often lacked the financial resources and depth of social networks to leverage a place in the development by other means. This confirms the observations by Tissington et al. (2013: 8) drawing on Royston and Eglin (2011) that "housing allocation, while loosely regulated by numerous policies

and systems, appears to be fundamentally about access to resources and power, and has little to do with individual housing needs". This put such households at risk of being shouldered out of the allocation equation, and raises questions about their vulnerability to downward raiding<sup>39</sup> should they succeed in being allocated a house in the Phase 3 development.

Other migrant households reported retaining stronger linkages with rural homesteads and home areas, although for many these appeared increasingly precarious and dependent on social grants. These linkages need to be understood against a backdrop of deindustrialisation and mounting urban unemployment nationally, together with the urbanisation of poverty within the Eastern Cape as people who lack the means to migrate to the main urban centres swell smaller rural towns (Bank and Minkley, 2005: 2). For these informants rural connections continued to provide lifelines of social meaning, and shaped decisions about remittance flows and where to prioritise social and economic investment. This emerged vividly in conversations around the place of the rural homestead which several older informants reported that they continue to extend and upgrade. This is less the case where younger people are concerned "who bear disproportionately the burden of unemployment and, unable to afford marriage or to build their own home, lack neither a stake in the formal economy nor in the parental household" (Hull, 2014: 458).

Posel et al. (2006) have found that rural social grants facilitate the ability of household members to look for employment away from home, but this, as Bank and Minkley (2005) caution, is dependent on access to social networks in the main urban centres. Those households which have the requisite networks engage in diffuse and multifaceted strategies to survive and thrive which draw up diverse resources and

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<sup>39</sup> Downward raiding refers to the buy-out of the poor by the more wealthy.

straddle the rural-urban space. Such diffusion does not necessarily ensure that people's livelihoods are more secure but suggests the existence of complex and dynamic rural-urban interconnections about which there is little contemporary research.

Households employing these dispersed strategies appeared to draw on stronger social webs of connection which linked them with others from their home areas in the informal settlement, and to other home mates living in the various hostel settings. These dispersed strategies remain highly dependent on relations of trust and reciprocity (Scoones, 1998) which straddle urban and rural space and which facilitate socio-economic flows in both directions. These livelihoods remain highly precarious, and moves which inadvertently disturb their operation are likely to be met with resistance.

These more subtle readings of the socio-economics of informality are closely connected with the foundational rationalities shaping wills to survive and thrive. This proposes a particular rationality of informality which is contingent and adaptive, while making optimum use of social ties and connections. As the case study makes clear, the nature of these strategies of struggle continues to be remote from the policy voice and poorly understood by the planners of the N2 Gateway, who retained a monocular focus on the provision of housing as a vehicle to reduce poverty, underpinned by assumptions that they engage with stable and definable 'communities' comprising homeowners who will remain invested in the future of the newly created 'place'. This confirms Ferguson's assessment of the prevalence of a "weak sense of how to engage with (informal settlements) analytically or politically" (Ferguson, 2007: 76) and understand the economic and social drivers which create and regulate them.

As detailed in Chapter 5 and above, people in the informal settlement respond to the interventions of the state in different ways. There has been an ongoing tension in

their strategic choices to remain relatively invisible or visible to the state and this forms an important element of their strategies to survive and thrive. This suggests the need for different perspectives on visibility, recognising that certain categories of residents may have the most to lose from making themselves visible to the state. The poorest households with the weakest social networks are particularly at risk, as they are least likely to be able to influence allocations and secure inclusion in the development. Non-qualifiers are also at risk, but given their improved financial base and increased access to people able to influence allocation processes, they are more likely to be able to find a way to secure their inclusion.

### **6.2.3 How have the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway in Langa exposed the underlying rationalities shaping relations amongst and between state and non-state actors and impacted on social contestation within Langa?**

Within the axis of the state the relationships amongst and between state actors and their intermediaries reveal diverse interpretations of the wills to govern that are directed to what Foucault terms “a whole series of specific finalities” (1979: 13). This exposes the link between governmentality and the practice of politics. Resistance is not something that is restricted to non-state actors and their relations with a disciplinary state. The case highlights intense intra-state contestation over the content of these finalities which colours the encounters between spheres of the state and decision-making tiers within individual state institutions. The case also highlights how the boundaries determining the reach of expert and bureaucratic rationality and its disciplinary hold on the poor have been constantly contested and redrawn by the interplay between state and non-state actors.

The findings illustrate how the actions of state actors and the associated constellation of ‘trustees’ tasked with implementation of the N2 Gateway were an expression of the master narrative of the developmental state. Their actions were determined, at

least initially, by the imperative to visibly effect rapid change and demonstrate the success of the new BNG policy direction. The emphasis lay on the need for speed, for development to be 'fast-tracked' and to deliver 'quick wins'. The measures of success drew on the quantitative metrics of construction and evidence of capacity to spend the allocated budget. This restricted the N2 Gateway in Langa to a narrow housing delivery focus within a circumscribed project space. The broader BNG policy vision was contracted by the myopia of micro-management associated with the different phases of construction that slowly regularised the freestanding informal settlement of Joe Slovo. These managerial priorities severed the project (at least in the eyes of the state managers) from the complex social histories of Langa and the changing interface between the urban and the rural within the township. The overarching logic of the megaproject sought to sidestep the molecular politics underpinning contesting claims on space and place crisscrossing the township and the informal settlement. However, the deep vein of contestation which the N2 Gateway tapped into in Langa shows how these factors constantly intruded to disturb and divide the constellation of actors associated with the state, all of whom broadly subscribed to the value propositions inherent in the 'will to govern and improve'. In the exercise of this will state actors pursued their own scripts, directing how political and institutional capital could be accrued through the project and how political damage associated with problems and failures could be inflicted or deflected. These reflect the different political, institutional and economic agendas shaping the priorities of institutional actors across the spheres of the state.

Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway provides the clearest example of the observation by Huchzermeyer and Karam (2006: 6) that many housing 'solutions' developed through the state and the market "are traded to a social class other than the original informal settlement dwellers". The disastrous implementation of the first phase of the project, which triggered multiple conflicts between the state and sections of

Langa residents together with a subsequent rent boycott, initiated a period of intense contestation. This was followed by equally intense political and institutional jockeying amongst actors in different spheres of the state who sought to avoid or reapportion blame for aspects of project failure.

While the state rolled forward in its war against shacks, individuals and social formations within the informal settlement who were threatened with displacement waged an intense struggle to keep their options and spaces open. This involved the evolution of a whole range of strategies attempting to ensure that their voices would find ears in the different recesses of the state. In the continuing reinvention of their bids to 'survive and thrive', emergent shackdweller leadership sought to increase their political and social influence within the broader circuitries of power in a bid to secure their claims on space and place. Local responses included the strengthening of organisation and the forging of external alliances, strategies shown through the interviews to have received widespread support. Although local organisation flourished for a period, it could not achieve unity within the settlement and, as has been examined in Chapter 5, this led to the Task Team and the Residents' Committees securing separate legal representation for the appeal to the Constitutional Court to reverse their eviction and secure their rights to housing.

There is no evidence of any serious attempt by the state or trustees to examine the basis of social divisions within Joe Slovo. While the Task Team and the Residents' Committees managed to maintain internal unity in their initial resistance to displacement, as soon as the matter was settled by the Constitutional Court judgment new pressures arose around how to manage access to the opportunities created. Local organisation began to succumb to contesting claims on the housing provided in Phase 3, and the continuing legitimacy of the Task Team began to be questioned when many in leadership positions were allocated units early in the construction of this phase. This saw the rise of other local structures and heightened

contestation over remaining allocations. This shift from resistance to the determination of who would benefit and who would be excluded from the development contributed to heightened levels of uncertainty and added volatility to the balances and flows of power within Joe Slovo, in Langa and in relation to institutions within the state.

In the early phases of the N2 Gateway agents of the state struggled to contain this insurgent social enlargement of presence, voice and power which operated on multiple fronts and mounted a challenge to the apparatus and systems of governmentality, threatening the schedule of rapid delivery. With regard to the flat dwellers in Joe Slovo Park, the state was forced to cede control of the precinct to those leading the rent boycott and appeared powerless to effectively intervene, as no sphere of government wanted to risk the political consequences of evicting tenants who were not compliant with their lease agreement and who were sub-letting flats. This state of affairs persisted until the end of the research period, when the HDA reported in February 2012 that the rental flats' "complex and troubled history spanning several years...[was]...finally being addressed in earnest" although at this point there was still no reversal of the rent boycott which awaited "formalising [of] all tenancies through the signing of lease agreements"(HDA, 2012: 1).

With regard to the subsequent phases of the N2 Gateway, the courts provided a strategic accommodation which served to reassert biopolitical order and state control. Agents of the state and associated trustees forged a technical and political realignment which launched a new bid to advance the N2 Gateway and legitimately eradicate informality. This sought to regulate the nature of state-'community' engagement, facilitate the 'rendering technical' of fundamentally political questions and effect *de facto* compromises with local power brokers, enabling them to exert influence over allocations in exchange for securing local compliance.

The case illustrates how the nature and intensity of these struggles changed substantially over the life of the project. It is important to note that the image-led narratives generated within the different social spaces in Langa and with officials and other actors were conducted in 2011 and 2012, at a particular moment in the evolution of the N2 Gateway. This coincided with processes of rethinking the way forward for the project following the Constitutional Court judgment in 2009. The contents of state and non-state narratives reflect the key features of this conjuncture. The triumphal simplification inherent in many of the earlier popular narratives about the N2 Gateway, which had cast a well-led and democratically organised community struggling to secure their rights to housing in contention with an unresponsive and stumbling state, began to be replaced by a more considered and analytical account of events. Revised narratives placed more emphasis on the nature of local contestations and patronage, the persistence of historical political and social divisions, and the new forms of local struggle which developed in response to state development interventions.

### ***State rationalities***

Despite common adherence to the 'will to govern and improve' the mix of overt and encrypted intra-state contestation which surfaced during the implementation of the N2 Gateway limited the ability of spheres of government to exercise this will in practice. In the earlier phases of the project contestations stemmed in part from attempts to centralise power, manifested in overt displays of individual sovereignty and control exemplified by Minister Sisulu, who issued edicts and instructions – imposing technically impossible deadlines, ordering changes in the design of dwellings and the colour of their roofs, threatening the recalcitrant informal settlement dwellers with removal from the housing waiting lists as punishment for their insubordination and applying for their eviction, while appointing individuals to act as her overseeing 'eye' within the apparatus of the state, ordering the removal



of officials perceived to be hampering progress and flirting with the enforcement of round-the-clock construction. These injunctions were also channelled through ministerial emissaries appointed to the M3 and Steercom structures, who emphasised the 'non-negotiability' of deadlines and sought to enforce requirements of strict confidentiality relating to project planning and progress. These attempts by national government to exercise overall power and control over the project were subtly contested by provincial and local spheres of the state even when political leadership in these spheres was in the hands of the ANC. The contestation grew in intensity as the ANC lost political control of the City and later the Province. The positions of contesting state actors appeared driven primarily by the desire for rapid political returns on investment. These short-term dividends were extracted at a high cost to people in the informal settlement, who were hastily relocated to make way for Phases 1 and 2, from which they were excluded. Officials and technical experts charged with project implementation became increasingly resistant to what they saw as uninformed political interference in technical matters.

Murray Li (2007) after Ferguson (1994) has emphasised the ways in which expert knowledge recasts political questions as technical problems. The case of the N2 Gateway illustrates a variation of this in which complex political and social relations particular to the project locality were simply blanked out in order to accommodate generic governmental schemes of improvement. In its early phases the N2 Gateway exemplified a process of political simplification which eschewed any need for 'rendering technical'. President Mbeki's speech at a municipal election rally in Khayelitsha in 2000, where he stated that "our people must not stay in shacks, they are not chickens, they are not pigs" (SAPA, 2000), provided the underlying narrative for the subsequent war on shacks declared by Minister Sisulu in 2004. Mbeki's bestialisation of informal settlements aligns with the dominant narrative that informality is an indicator of 'deficiency', an affront to the modern – a rent in the

fabric of the city that must either be “filled in, and injected with support” or eradicated (Wade, 2009: 14). Wade (2009) cites Mitchell (2002: 10) to the effect that “objects of analysis” such as informal settlements do not exist independently as “natural phenomena, but are partly formed by the discourse that describes them”. This discourse contributed to political and technical simplification which in turn set up contestations which would lead to the rupture of political and expert discourse. The resultant challenges to the conceptualisation and implementation of the N2 Gateway illustrated multiple switches and significant reversals in the circuitries of power. These included micro-reversals within the state itself between spheres of government and in the relationships between political representatives, officials and technical experts. There were also prominent oscillations and periodic reversals in the exercise of power between the state and those it sought to govern and improve. This created a deep period of instability and sustained challenge to the state, before the judgment of the Constitutional Court and the change of housing ministers in 2009 recalibrated the balance between the political and the technical. This change in the register of struggle served to revalue and restore the supremacy of technical expert knowledge, and culminated in the formation of the HDA which was presented as the new face of the developmental state.

These switches and reversals within the spheres of state and the changing nature of their engagement in Langa and Joe Slovo reveal enormous complexities in the “practice of government” (Li, 2007: 11) and the plurality of its pursuits and desired “finalities”. The early episodes of the N2 Gateway, in particular the handling of the 2005 fire, challenge another implicit binary in the conceptual framework which had tacitly assumed that the ‘will to survive and thrive’ was the territory of the poor and marginal. This event graphically illustrates the many ways in which officials, their relatives and contacts (together with ‘community’ leaders) were able to milk the disaster for personal benefit. This revealed the shadowy practices enveloping the

project, which included the improper appointment of the first project manager, allegations of overcharging by contractors for poor quality construction in Phase 1, and the creation of opportunities for opportunistic officials and their associates to extract money from people desperate for housing.

The period following the removal of the City of Cape Town from its management role and attempts to override the provincial department by national government provides insights into other dimensions of state rationality. It reveals the ways in which the apparatus and practices of government can be turned in on themselves to constitute a potent source of frustration and planning delay. Attempts to 'fast-track' the project by the national department were tacitly, yet effectively, resisted by provincial and local officials who turned to the fine print of regulation and planning procedures to slow things to a crawl. The effectiveness of this capacity of spheres of government to frustrate each other was openly acknowledged in Phase 3 of the project where the HDA, with the renewed political support of the new national Minister of Human Settlements, prioritised the reinstatement of intergovernmental management structures to allow the project to go forward.

The experience of the N2 Gateway contributes a more nuanced view to the distinction drawn by Li between the practice of government and practices of politics. The implementation of the project reveals that challenges to the operations of the state originate from within state institutions as well as from social forces outside the state. In the case of Langa and the N2 Gateway, while implementing agents of the state faced intense challenges from marginalised backyarders and organised informal settlement residents, they also faced a range of other more subtle but just as disabling challenges from within the provincial and city bureaucracies.

Analysis of the findings demonstrates that the more remote the location of state actors from the actualities of Langa and Joe Slovo, the simpler their narratives and interpretations of local realities became. Distance contributed to the stripping out of

the significance of history and context. Following Scott, this allowed for the seamless imposition of the processes through which “officials took exceptionally complex and illegible local social practices... and created a standard grid...all calculated to make the terrain, its products and its workforce more legible” (Scott, 1998: loc 111). In this instance the orientation of the official “standard grid” was premised on the rapid delivery of housing as an indicator of the effectiveness of the developmental state, to eliminate informality and address the problems of the migrant and urban poor. The emphasis was on its quantum and physical form. Housing delivery became an end in itself, one which brushed aside the needs of people living in the informal settlement and in the backyards of Langa. This was starkly evident in the first phase of the project, which allocated the majority of newly constructed flats to people from other areas primarily in a bid to hasten their occupation.

Overall the implementers of the N2 Gateway chose to avoid the difficult territorial and tenure questions implicit in allocations policy, such as who should have rights to be housed on land within Langa township. The project managers invoked the fiction of the housing waiting list to shroud the extent to which actual allocations were *ad hoc* and open to the influences of local power brokers and their networks among agents of the state. This revealed the twin tracks of state rationality, which simultaneously sought to evoke the security of procedures and instruments of governmentality while selectively ignoring their requirements.

In contrast to the remoteness of the national and provincial institutions of state there existed a relatively small coterie of officials from different branches within the City of Cape Town – Informal Settlements Management, the Anti-Land Invasion Unit, Development Support and Disaster Management – who engaged regularly with people on the ground within Langa. Officials in these departments employed different strategies to regulate and manage these encounters. The strategy of the Anti-Land Invasion Unit was to forge local alliances with leaders to repel outsiders,

while Disaster Management and officials from Informal Settlement Management sought to keep any contact with “the masses” at arm’s length. Initially the latter entities sought to work through the local municipal councillor, on the assumption that local politics were the domain of the dominant political party at the time. As local dissatisfaction with councillors mounted in Langa and political fractures became more pronounced, this approach became no longer viable. This prompted the state to fall back on agencies like the HDA, with their promises of expert project management and partnerships with ‘trustees’ which served to redraw the “transactional reality” of the state as defined by Foucault, (2004: 301) in Lemke (2007: 6). State proxies such as the HDA increasingly became the face of governmentality, largely insulating officials and politicians from local challenges.

Overall the discourses of state actors reveal deep uncertainties about how to respond to rapid urbanisation and the upwelling of informality. Some emphasised the need for an unambiguous disciplinary role for the state, best expressed by the senior official cited in Chapter 5, who argued that the state was responsible for providing public education for its citizens while maintaining technical oversight over their lives. However, his key proposition was that neither of these initiatives would be successful unless backed up by enforcement capacity to make people play by the rules. In another response to these challenges, senior officials advocated a “medical problem solving” model to diagnose and dispense solutions (N2 Gateway Task Team, 2007). These approaches to problematisation highlight close relationships between state sovereignty, discipline and the day-to-day practices of governmental management, and provide important insights into the rationalities of the state.

### ***Planning the N2 Gateway – the three voices in the state ensemble***

Three voices emerge clearly in the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway. First there is the policy voice which is shrouded in assumed neutrality and speaks

the language of improvement, invoking the instruments of biopolitics and governmentality. This voice confidently presents all the diagnoses, targets, objectives, harnesses, levers, linkages, mechanisms, capacities, interventions, transactions, business plans and social facilitation necessary to overcome perceived barriers to housing delivery. However the measured and rational tones of the policy voice are countered and often overwhelmed by imperative political voices from contesting centres of power. In the N2 Gateway these voices included the Minister and her advisers. For a brief period at the outset of the project the political voices appeared to sing in unison, but they soon fell into discord when the balance of political power shifted, first in the city and then in the province.

The policy voice was enhanced by the technical voices of the officials and specialists responsible for aspects of actual implementation, which represent extensions of state power. These voices all employ vocabularies of simplification. Where they find alignment, the policy voice seeks to craft generic solutions for complex local problems and the political voice promises shortcuts and invokes the capacity of the developmental state to deliver rapid improvements, while summoning the technical voice to offer expertise and communicative rationality to neutralise contestation within the implementation space. The relative ascendancy of these voices has changed in the course of the implementation of the N2 Gateway. At the outset the political voices were loudest as the new BNG policy voice was still finding its register, and technical voices remained firmly under instruction. However the public failure of Phase 1 reasserted the policy voice and gave increased precedence to the technical voices through the formation of the HDA.

The N2 Gateway provides important insights into the state and its relations with civil society. Following Oldfield (2008), Swilling observes how the state emerges as a “vast and complex conglomeration of institutions constituted at different levels and

spaces...[that] are embedded within wider contestations and are, therefore constantly shaping and being reshaped by these processes” (Swilling, 2008: 501).

### ***Rationalities of non-state development actors and trustees***

In the early phases of the N2 Gateway the only visible non-state development actors were contractors involved in construction who, together with state agencies like Thubelisha, started to play an expanded role in ‘community facilitation’ alongside local councillors. As local party political contestations became more pronounced in Langa so the legitimacy of elected councillors began to erode and they were increasingly dismissed as politically partisan. This is also reflected in the development of a National Housing Allocation Strategy in 2008 which sought to “depoliticise the housing allocation process” (Tissington et al., 2013: 33) and which removed councillors from allocation structures.

As noted above, Li’s conception of trusteeship includes “so called non-government organisations of various kinds” (Li, 2007b: 5). The rationalities of the non-state actors active in the N2 Gateway are best arranged in a matrix according to their relative proximity or distance from the state.

Proximity to the state		Distance from the state	
Contractors	DAG	AEC	
FEDUP, CORC, ISN, Ikhayalami, SDI affiliates		Abahlali base Mjondolo	

The South African (SA) SDI affiliates strongly reinforce their status as trustees in close proximity to the state with a strong improvement ethos built on savings, self-enumeration, blocking out and community-based planning “to create solidarity and unity of the urban poor so that they are well organised, and equipped with the skills, knowledge and scale needed to create meaningful change”, and mediate deals with the state (SDI South African Alliance, 2012b). SA SDI affiliates entered Joe Slovo

determined to practise their rituals of improvement and engaging primarily with the presence of shacks. They, too, largely overlooked the history of Joe Slovo and its social articulation with Langa. They made their approach through existing settlement hierarchies, aligning with the forces deemed to be most powerful on the ground, ostensibly so as not to “tamper” with existing relations of power but effectively serving to reinforce and legitimate them. As Li (2007) has observed, claims of expertise and knowing what others need are claims to power. SA SDI’s approach “in generating ‘win-win’ solutions that create revised models of development” (SDI South African Alliance, 2012a) places them very close to the state, while their connection with the Joe Slovo task team and subsequent employment of local leadership to head up the ISN, which had been purposively created as a “different kind of social movement that builds partnerships with government in a collaborative manner to advance people-centred development and improved service delivery” (ibid.) raises questions about whose interests are ultimately being served.

DAG shares some elements of the CORC ethos, espousing a “seven-step methodology: building strategic partnerships; citizen mobilisation; capacity building; research; advocacy/lobbying; demonstration projects; and learning from practice” (DAG, 2014). However in the case of the N2 Gateway they opted for a research advocacy and lobbying position, undertaking research to highlight the impacts of forced relocation to Delft.

Until recently the AEC and Abahlali have been virtually indistinguishable in relation to Joe Slovo, in that their websites syndicated coverage of issues and struggles in Joe Slovo and the N2 Gateway. For some time this created the public impression that the Joe Slovo Task Team was allied to, or even affiliated with, Abahlali. The AEC characterise themselves as being “like a set of cutlery... tools that are there to be used by poor communities fighting against the cruel and oppressive conditions of



South African society” (AEC, n.d.). While the AEC subscribes to a radical and insurgent reading of the ‘will to survive and thrive’, elements in their discourse also resonate with the will to improve. The AEC supports legal challenges to eviction and cut-offs, undertakes research into “concrete alternatives” to current policies of the state and provides programmes of organisational “capacity building”. Yet on the basis of its role in Langa, it appears that the AEC works with an unproblematised concept of ‘community’ that valorises resistance. Their strategy of forming loose alliances for campaigns has meant that they have found themselves adopting contradictory positions in Joe Slovo. They started out strongly supporting the Task Team and its leadership, before this was directly and unequivocally challenged by a new Abahlali formation in the Intersite TRA which accused the Task Team and its leadership of collusion in corrupt allocation of housing units in Phase 3. This resulted in a switch in AEC support to a grouping identified as the “Joe Slovo Liberative Residents”<sup>40</sup> (AEC, n.d.). A similar situation developed with the Phase 1 rent boycott in Joe Slovo Park, where the AEC put their digital “cutlery” at the disposal of the tenants’ committee while turning a blind eye to sub-letting and the emergence of powerful informal landlords who had started to take control of units and who were forcibly evicting those who did not pay.

Overall analysis of the role of non-state actors and trustees in Joe Slovo reveals that their engagements with, and readings of the N2 Gateway in Langa, not unlike those of the state, also rest on simplifications. These include simplifications about the workings of power, the nature of resistance and notions of ‘community’ which serve to abridge complex and messy molecular struggles related to contesting claims on space and place, mediated by networks of patronage and power. Such abridgement

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<sup>40</sup> No committee or group with this name was identified during the research phase.

serves to render the complex local struggles more legible, and ease their fit into the storylines dispensed by these diverse actors.

#### **6.2.4 How does the case of the N2 Gateway in Langa illuminate the concepts of “conflicting rationalities” and “deep difference”**

The analysis shifts now to examine the spaces of encounter between Langa residents in the informal settlement and associated settings with actors in the state and orbiting ‘trustees’. It reviews the ways in which these encounters challenge and enlarge the concept of “conflicting rationalities” and “deep difference”, as elaborated by Watson (2003, 2006), in the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway in Langa. As explored further below, conflicting rationalities and deep difference have a particular elasticity in the context of the N2 Gateway. They extend far beyond the conventional binary of ‘state’ and ‘community’. The narratives of diverse Langa actors set out in the previous reveal contending rationalities and deep differences within Langa itself which provides a caution against homogenisation and simplification within underlying social theory and its claims to explanation. These reveal the essentially remote and opaque nature of the state for them, and the widespread unintelligibility of its schemes of improvement. For residents of the Joe Slovo informal settlement, sightings of the state were fleeting. After the police, the most visible political and bureaucratic state actors encountered were the local councillors, and officials in the Langa Housing Office, Disaster Management, Informal Settlements Management and the Anti-Land Invasion Unit. As the N2 Gateway got under way project managers Cyberia, Thubelisha and the HDA assumed increasing prominence, although there was little distinction made between them among informal settlement residents. These were augmented by flying visits made by Ministers and MECs who launched programmes, officiated at handover ceremonies and occasionally intervened to manage crises. Overall the outline of the state remains blurred and amorphous. It is a source of promises and prevarications

and an aggregation of arbitrary attempts of different provenance to record, regulate, and impose order.

Watson's (2006) concept of "deep difference" primarily foregrounds differences between the state and the community, and differences within 'communities' themselves. The present research findings confirm that these differences run deep, but show them to be more elaborate than envisaged in their original conceptualisation. Theoretically the state is the champion of biopolitical order and custodian of the apparatus of governmentality but the imprint of the state which emerges through the N2 Gateway is fundamentally fragmented. The delays and failures of the megaproject are as much a product of intrastate contestation as they are a consequence of local resistance and appropriation.

There are deep differences between the state's projection of itself and how it is seen locally. There is an enormous gulf between conceptual constructions of the developmental state (Edigheji, 2005; Gumede, 2008; Edigheji, 2010; Gumede, 2011) and the nature of its practices. Councillors are theoretically at the frontline of a system of participatory and developmental local government, signifiers of democracy, the ears and voice of governance. Yet local informants expressed dismissive and even derisory sentiments about councillors and party political representatives in general, pointing to their energy at election time, their lethargy thereafter and their many promises which mostly came to nothing. In many instances these sentiments extended a challenge to formal systems of governance in their entirety and reflected the argument advanced by Zikode that "there is a permanent crisis in the ordinary lives of the poor" (Zikode, 2008: 114) – a crisis which agents of the state and civil society do not comprehend, cannot address and may serve to perpetuate. These sentiments percolate through the encounters of the poor with the state and its trustees.

The front end of the state, in the form of the Langa Housing office, its systems of registration and processes of housing allocation, was regarded with deep suspicion by most informants. This led to the proliferation of shack numbering systems which have been attempted at different times by the City of Cape Town, contracted consultants, the N2 Gateway project managers and the CORC/Joe Slovo enumeration. These attempted to arrest the mobility associated with migration, but the ongoing transactions within informal tenure systems and displacement due to fire continually eluded and outpaced these enumerations whose data were often out of date before they were captured.

The social history and changing composition of the informal settlement, and its interconnectedness with the rural sending areas, various Langa hostels and backyards and the TRAs, fall outside the gaze of the state, irrespective of the sphere. Migrant labour – one of the dominant markers of South African social and economic history – is relegated to the margins of housing and urbanisation policy. As noted previously, the predominant state rationality in the N2 Gateway is driven by the perceived “inferiority of informality” (Tissington, 2011). This infuses the attitudes of most agents of the state and can extend to the people who live in informal settlements. The primary message from the war on shacks is that the antidote to informality is the state provision of a formal house. However the provision of this housing in the N2 Gateway quickly became encumbered with politics – a politics which is increasingly exclusionary and hard of hearing. This was at the heart of the deep differences within the state and its relations with people living in Joe Slovo and Langa.

Despite the formal emphasis on the UISP in the BNG policy, there was no attempt by the state to closely examine the origins of Joe Slovo and its roots in the social history of Langa. This would have surfaced the presence of deep local difference – the micropolitics of territory, differentiation and belonging which are at the heart of the

Cape border-*amagoduka* divide – and it might have suggested a different approach to the planning and implementation of the N2 Gateway component in Langa.

Despite a policy focus on *in situ* upgrading, there was no investigation to examine the nature of the access mechanisms to the settlement, or if indeed there were emergent informal tenure rules such as those identified in informal settlements in the Eastern Cape which contribute to local constructions of social order (Davies and Fourie, 2002). More importantly, there is no evidence of attempts to investigate whether there was a particular rationality driving informality in this context. Instead the interplay between informal settlement residents and agents of the state arising from the intervention of the N2 Gateway became increasingly dominated by a series of two-track discourses on shacks and houses, backyarders and informal settlers, access and displacement, qualification and non-qualification, allocations and approval criteria. There remained a pervasive silence in official discourse concerning rural-urban linkages, and a belated and hesitant engagement with contesting claims on space and place within the broader context of Langa. This was connected to a deeper silence on the nature of the relationship between poverty and informality.

The provision of rental housing in Phase 1 and bonded units in Phase 2 displaced the poor and ignited fierce resistance to rental tenure, and contestation around the densification proposed by the N2 Gateway. The then provincial MEC was reported to have acknowledged local demands for “a house which is freestanding, where you could stay with your kids and your dogs in your own fence” along with secure access to land for cultural practices (Interview: Langa Councillor 02M 14th October 2012) – another blind spot in the story of urbanisation. This hostility on the part of residents to densification reportedly prompted Minister Sisulu to revise plans for densification in Phase 3, contrary to the BNG policy, before this was subsequently overturned by the PGWC in the aftermath of the court judgment.

As noted in Chapter 4 above, the Joe Slovo narratives are divided between a deep pessimism and uncertainty about the future, and a stubborn hope of redemptive change which will eradicate the day-to-day afflictions of informal settlement residents. This is reflected in both the spikes of popular anger and desperation at the threat of exclusion and oscillations of hope that the N2 Gateway will somehow address people's needs.

Conflicting rationalities and deep difference are revealed as the defining characteristics of relationships between the actors located in the state and amongst and between social groupings within Langa and the informal settlement. Despite initial indications that the poor had become strong, as in the Abahlali narrative of resistance and mobilisation, the subsequent episodes of the N2 Gateway following the Constitutional Court judgment degenerated into the "politics of a few people who have learnt some fancy political words and who expect everyone to follow them because they know these words" (Zikode, 2008: 115) – a molecular politics of position, co-option and patronage linked to reconfigured claims on space, place and belonging.

#### **6.2.5 How does the complex of contestations surfaced by the N2 Gateway reveal the "permanent provocation", oscillations and reversals along "the frontier for the relationship of power" (Foucault, 1982) between the expressions of the 'will to govern and improve' of the state and its intermediaries and local struggles 'to survive and thrive'?**

The complex of contestations surfaced by the N2 Gateway reveals a series of oscillations and reversals along "the frontier for the relationship of power" (Foucault, 1982). These ruptures and reversals operate at different scales and in settings where the developmental agenda of the state is mediated or countered by the complexity of factors shaping the topology of space and place, and the

conflicting social claims upon it and within it. Some of these ruptures and reversals are highly public and clearly visible, while others are fine-scaled with close equivalence to Scott's (1990) notion of "hidden transcripts of resistance" which emit subtle counter-pulses and challenges to divert the dominant flows of power.

The promotion of a high-speed, high-profile megaproject model by the state and its project managers, intended to showcase the developmental state in action, actively created the conditions for the hijack of the rental flats in Phase 1. The political injunctions to accelerate the project concatenated throughout the initiative, which drove relentlessly forward with inadequate monitoring of building quality and insufficient measures to contain costs. The absence of a social housing policy, and the lack of a coherent allocations policy or an institution to manage the flats and their tenants once completed, created the perfect storm for the rent boycott and subsequent takeover of the flats by the tenants, many of whom continue to generate cost-free revenue from sub-letting.

Undaunted by the issues surfaced by Phase 1, Thubelisha, with the support of the Minister of Housing, pushed forward with the planning of the next phase, arbitrarily introducing a gap housing component and entering into an agreement with FNB. This sent a clear signal to the remaining residents of Joe Slovo that the N2 Gateway was not going to cater for them. This built up the pressure for a second storm in Joe Slovo which saw marches and protests which were ignored, culminating in the occupation of the N2 freeway by the very people that BNG and the N2 Gateway project professed to support but whom they had served to marginalise.

Undaunted, the provincial MEC for Local Government released a media statement stating that the blocking of the N2 was "an attempt to block delivery", condemning the "violent protest" which it described as an act of "hooliganism", and stating that there were "some elements of people who want to hijack the development in that area and use it for their wrong purposes" (PGWC, 2007). The statement warned that

Joe Slovo could not accommodate everyone, noting that “it will therefore require some people to relocate permanently to an alternative location” of which “the Delft TRA is currently the viable alternative”. As has been examined, the subsequent actions of the state to seek eviction of the residents, which was upheld in the Cape High Court, led to the Constitutional Court challenge.

These two examples highlight major reversals of power. In the case of Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway the tenants were able to capture and appropriate a state asset not by stealth, mass action or subterfuge but simply because the confused and rushed processes of internally conflicted state agencies left the metaphorical door to Joe Slovo Park wide open. In the case of Joe Slovo the ruptures and reversals resulted from the systematic marginalisation of the residents of the informal settlement, which left them with no alternative but to contest the state head-to-head.

The Constitutional Court ruling required the state to engage in “meaningful consultation” with the residents of Joe Slovo and Langa. Although the court upheld the eviction order, it imposed conditions which made this virtually impossible to implement, and with its reservation of units for Joe Slovo residents laid the ground for an *in situ* development to take place. However the creation of a mandatory invited space for consultation in the form of a project steering committee marked the switch of power and control back to the state, as Joe Slovo residents now found themselves represented as part of a wider and notionally more inclusive structure. This led to intense contestation for the control of this committee, and with it the process of allocations for Phase 3.

Beneath these high-visibility struggles are countless contestations and micro reversals in the circuitries of power. These include the ‘creepage’ of shacks and the subterfuges employed to insert new dwellings or extensions of dwellings into the settlement, avoiding the instruments of surveillance. They also include making use of opportunities to add people to the official settlement registers in the aftermath of a



fire event. The contestations following the 2005 fire illustrate how state officials clawed back control and moved people to Delft by stealth, making on-the-spot judgement calls about who should be housed where.

The self-enumeration was presented by the CORC as a way of obtaining knowledge to build a stronger negotiating position. However this knowledge was quickly appropriated by the state, which had been struggling for years to get a more accurate picture of the settlement and its inhabitants. But like all preceding surveys it contained gaps in information, and may have functioned as an instrument of exclusion on a small scale. And like all survey data, its accuracy was quickly overtaken as people who were not recorded on the original lists were able to find their way in.

The establishment of the HDA and the reassertion of the professional power and technical rationalities of project management, planning and development facilitation have resulted in the realignment of the N2 Gateway, and enabled the state to retake control. However this balance remains precarious, as the Habermasian presumption that power can be parked outside the door, while agents of the state and ‘community’ “judge facts...[and] act in a purposive rational way”, “evaluating matters with sensitivity” (Habermas, 1984: 21) so as to reach consensus, has little chance of traction in the deeply contested spaces of the post-apartheid city scarred by the structural poverties which characterise the global South.

### **6.3. Conclusion**

As can be seen from the discussion above, the subsidiary questions are closely related. The analysis of the finding and formulation of answers to the research questions reveal webs of connection and imbrication which return to key themes while revealing the highly dynamic nature of the case, and shifts in actor rationalities and their conflicts and accommodations over time.

As noted in preceding chapters, rationalities are elusive and at times mercurial. They are not fixed but adaptive, and in the process of their delineation fresh levels of complexity are revealed which recall Foucault's insights into the construction and the nature of discourse:

*...one tries to rediscover beyond the statements themselves the intention of the speaking subject, his conscious activity, what he meant, or, again, the unconscious activity that took place despite himself in what he said or in the almost imperceptible fracture of his original words; in any case, we must reconstitute another discourse, rediscover the silent murmuring, the inexhaustible speech that animates from within the voice that one hears, re-establish the tiny, invisible text that runs between and sometimes collides with them. The analysis of thought is always allegorical in relation to the discourse that it employs. Its question is unfailingly: what was being said in what was said?*

(Foucault, 1989: 30)

This chapter, in its efforts to engage with the many voices and narrative grammars employed by the diverse cast of actors associated with the N2 Gateway, has attempted to extract the essence of "what was being said" so as to address the five closely woven subsidiary research questions, and provide the basis on which to address the central research question and write back to theory in Chapter 7.

# **Chapter 7**

## **WRITING BACK TO THEORY**

### **7.1. Introduction**

The previous six chapters have narrated the theoretical, methodological and analytical journey undertaken to distil the significance of the N2 Gateway in relation to the central research questions, in order to identify what can be learnt to contribute to planning theory and practice.

Chapter 6 mined the research findings to formulate answers to subsidiary research questions which sought to identify ways in which the N2 Gateway megaproject has crystallised contestations over space, place and belonging, illuminating the strategies of struggle and the nature of actor rationalities to reveal deep difference together with oscillations and reversals in the flows of power. This preliminary analysis provides the basis on which to address the central research questions in order to revisit and enlarge the framing theory which is the focus of Chapter 7, and make a series of theoretical propositions which are distilled from the analysis of the case. This highlights the value of the retroductive case method, which enables reflection back to urban and planning theory and practice so as to increase cognisance of the rationalities of informality in the post-apartheid city.

### **7.2. Why do megaprojects like the N2 Gateway so often fail?**

The central research question asks why megaprojects like the N2 Gateway, planned with the aim of improving the quality of life of poor and marginal urban residents of the post-apartheid city, so often fail to realise their planned improvements and result in unintended consequences.

This section commences with a focus on the particular character of megaprojects and the factors which place them at high risk of failure. Flyvbjerg et al. (2003: 3) identify the “performance paradox” of megaprojects, observing that they generally “have strikingly poor performance records in terms of economy, environment and public support” while “cost overruns and lower-than-predicted revenues frequently place project viability at risk”. Jennings (2012) observes that megaprojects are often the product of “high politics” which seek to make a national statement of technical prowess or social significance, while Moran’s exploration of failed megaprojects highlights how these are the “the product of particular systems of politics – of modes of decision (and non-decision) that reflect distinct configurations of power” (2001: 417). His case studies of “policy catastrophes” yield the concept of “icon politics” which promotes “projects conceived for their symbolic value”. Despite the significant risks associated with megaprojects they are often planned as if they “exist in a predictable Newtonian world of cause and effect where things go according to plan” (Flyvbjerg et al., 2003: 6). This makes them emblematic of rationalities of power and delivery – a key site for analysis of the practices of actors in the state and a zone with rich contributions to “the discursive construction of the state in public culture”(Gupta, 1995).

These observations are particularly apposite in the case of the N2 Gateway, with its contested implementation in Langa and initial failure to deliver benefits for the poor and marginal. Evidence from the preceding chapters illustrates clearly how the N2 Gateway was the product of “high politics”, responding to the need to rebrand housing policy and delivery. As noted in Chapter 5, a prominent part of the conversations in the research process focused on the architectural models and the billboards which purported to evoke the sustainable human settlements imaginary, as expressed through the associated rationalities of governmentality. The billboard for the N2 Gateway Phase 3 (Appendix 1: Image B11) repeated the Freedom

Charter's promise that "Slums shall be abolished", amplified by the uppercase marketing pledge: "COMING SOON!" The billboard beside the freeway, stood against a backdrop of concrete bucket toilets and the Joe Slovo shack settlement. The imagery deployed suggested a spacious gated housing estate. Its objective was to replace the shack, as a deviant icon of poverty, with a new image of modernity and progress – a housing typology of a different quality to the so-called 'matchbox housing' delivered in grids of monotonous regularity during the first decade of housing delivery. The billboards showcased the N2 Gateway imaginary as a potent symbol of transformation – a brand marker for new housing policy and a better life for all, and an icon for the developmental state. However the many problems which quickly overwhelmed the megaproject soon conspired to give the symbols perverse meanings. Within Langa the new buildings constructed in the N2 Gateway Phases 1 and 2 metamorphosed into icons of exclusion. The flats were unaffordable to those who expected to be accommodated there, while the Phase 2 gap housing units next door remained guarded but inexplicably empty for years, symbolising the frustrating shortfalls in the promises of the developmental state.

The N2 Gateway was the flagship of new BNG policy which sought to articulate a fundamental break with the past. Housing policy had set out to reduce asset poverty over the first decade since 1994, but in practice providing the poor with access to housing had had "a limited impact on poverty alleviation" (Charlton and Kihato, 2006: 255). This highlighted the widening gap between the social assurances of reconstruction and development and the realities of its practices. This can be discerned in the tension between the discourse of policy activists and the content of policy authorised by the state. It emerges through a comparative analysis of the transformative expectations of those closely associated with the crafting of BNG policy (Menguelé et al., 2008) and the implied technical neutrality of the policy document itself (Department of Housing, 2004a). Menguelé et al. set out to provide

insight into the subtexts of BNG and its perceived break with the “simplistic and reductionist” propositions of the 1994 Housing White Paper (Department of Housing, 1994). The White Paper’s preoccupation with housing subsidies and project management was dismissed as “pragmatic developmentalism” (Menguelé et al., 2008: 183). Those close to the policy-making circle argued that BNG reshaped housing development discourse with its new focus on sustainable human settlements. They envisaged a new “transformative developmentalism” which promised that BNG would simultaneously provide quality housing, alleviate poverty, promote social cohesion and enable spatial restructuring. BNG was characterised as “an ambitious attempt to navigate contending and complex trajectories that repeatedly produce and reinforce spatial dysfunctionalities and social inequalities” (2008: 179). The success of the new policy hinged on what the policy drafters characterised as the “ideational and political capacity” and the “technical and implementational capacity” of the developmental state (ibid.: 179) required to subdue complex and messy post-apartheid realities. However BNG’s vision of a radical departure from the practices of the first decade was premised on governance arrangements which continue to elude the South African state. These proposed “more sophisticated and refined conceptions of governance, institutional integration, intergovernmental relations and the activist developmental state”. These reforms were regarded as the prerequisites to “anchor a highly ambitious and promising policy direction in the complex and power ridden materialities of local spaces and regimes of government” (ibid.: 180).

Implementing this new approach to housing policy and urban management was premised on an increasingly muscular state which could “paradoxically borrow some elements from the traditional control-based approaches to governance” that included “enforcing by-laws through the means of evictions to protect public assets” (Menguelé, 2007: 9). The BNG policy document suggested a “need to develop a

single overarching planning authority and/or instrument to provide macro level guidance to support the development of sustainable human settlements” (Department of Housing, 2004a: 7-8). However BNG also set out to moderate expectations of the developmental state with the acknowledgement that “significant capacity constraints are currently being experienced in the public sector”, arguing that it was “vital that the resources of the private sector be harnessed to deliver housing programmes at scale” (Department of Housing, 2004a: 3).

The nature and assumptions of this new discourse require close scrutiny, as they inform particular rationalities which influenced the approach to the N2 Gateway and which directly contributed to the many problems experienced in the pilot. BNG presented mixed messages with regard to informal settlement upgrading. On the one hand it proposed a phased approach involving an initial phase of community survey and processes of consultation to determine housing needs, followed by provision of basic services, social amenities and “secure tenure for the entire community”. Only once this had been achieved would housing be developed “in response to community demand” (Department of Housing, 2004a: 12). This slow and carefully negotiated process was fundamentally out of step with the BNG target of “eradicating” informal settlements by 2014, which was soon revealed as a policy mirage.

Charlton and Kihato have attributed the swing in favour of informal settlement eradication discourse to negative reactions to “the visual dimensions of these settlements”, noting that such discourse lacks “a clear understanding of these highly visible manifestations of poverty, mobility and survival strategies” (2006: 258). Perhaps more important is the threat that informal settlements are perceived to pose to the potency of the state apparatus, and the ways in which their persistence is interpreted as a marker of state inadequacy.

As the experience of the N2 Gateway makes clear, the UISP processes set out in the BNG document discussed above were completely ignored during the early phases of the megaproject. There was no prior research or effective survey to read the future project space. There was little meaningful consultation, as the agents of the state had already made up their minds about what ‘the people’ wanted. Critically, tenure security, rights and allocations were never discussed or addressed. This illuminates an important dimension of the megaproject “performance paradox” wherein “high politics” dispenses with details of process in its quest for rapid results. In the case of Langa the absence of a careful analysis of the characteristics and drivers of informality, its relations with structural poverty and the deepening collapse in the countryside, meant that the knowledge base for the N2 Gateway pilot project was weak. Despite these shortcomings it was asserted that the pilots would test and push the boundaries of BNG through unspecified “‘in’ and ‘out of the box’ interventions” (Menguelé et al., 2008: 183).

As the preceding narratives and the project’s history make clear, the “evolving human settlements imaginary” is twinned with the imaginary of the developmental state. Its operation is deemed to be the responsibility of national government, which in turn should provide support and guidance to the provincial and local spheres of government. This rests on the assumption that primary capacity and authority are located within national departments. The experience of the N2 Gateway exposes this conceptualisation of the developmental state as a fundamental misreading of the relative capacities of national, provincial and metropolitan spheres of government. Schmidt (2008) proposes a counter view to the assumed hierarchy, suggesting that “a study of the relative competence of the three levels of government would find that local government in general has a higher level of general competence than national and provincial governments” (2008: 115). In the case of Langa and Joe Slovo, this assessment was undoubtedly correct. At the launch of the N2 Gateway existing state



capacity and knowledge of the township lay primarily within the City of Cape Town. It had already reblocked Joe Slovo following the 2000 fire. Basic services had been supplied. Some measures to attempt to maintain a database of inhabitants had been put in place, and some means of consultation with residents had been established. The City had already begun work on the development of an *in situ* upgrading strategy for the informal settlement prior to the launch of the N2 Gateway. Likewise it was the City which was driving the hostels upgrading programme in Langa and which managed rental stock. There was potential for connections to be made between these various initiatives which could have resulted in a more integrated approach, but the launch of BNG and the N2 Gateway megaproject was accompanied by a shift in intergovernmental relations, with national government seeking to impose tight control on the pilot. This, as Schmidt has observed, marked the move away from collaboration between spheres of government as set out in the Constitution, and a *de facto* reversion to the tiered hierarchies characteristic of old order governance arrangements. Schmidt further observes that this tension between spheres and tiers was “an important element in the contemporary debate on the developmental state” (2008: 117).

The initial contestations around the pilot, and the origins of the failure of the first phase of the N2 Gateway to address the needs of the poor and marginal in Joe Slovo, were aggravated by the imposition of a tiers approach. National government sought to micromanage the megaproject and control public communication of progress. Despite the establishment of structures such as the M3 and Steercom to manage intergovernmental relations for the pilot, the authority of the Minister was paramount. The substantial political investment by national government in eradicating informal settlements increased the vulnerabilities associated with responsibility for an iconic megaproject, and did much to hasten its early failure. Even before the N2 Gateway was formally launched it had become the locus of

political expectation and contestation. After the launch these pressures ballooned sharply. Shortcuts were taken at every level, starting with the appointment of the first project manager. The loss of ANC political control of Cape Town was a game changer for the N2 Gateway, which was confirmed as a political project and an icon of national government. This stripped away the pretences of co-operative governance and ushered in a prolonged period of inter-governmental contestation. Thubelisha Homes was called off the bench as a poor substitute for the City, and was predestined for failure without its support.

The N2 Gateway, for all its rhetoric about the creation of sustainable human settlements, became locked into the old paradigm of 'development as delivery'. All energies were focused on physical construction of the Phase 1 flats and the negotiation of Phase 2 gap housing. The metrics of success remained determined by the number of units constructed within notional deadlines. The construction imperative trumped essential policy and institutional development, so that by the time the social housing units had been constructed there was still no approved social housing policy or appointed management institution. By this stage all the indicators pointed to full blown megaproject "performance paradox". Through their actions and approach state actors and associated trustees active in the N2 Gateway combined to create intense local resistance to the pilot. The combination of authoritarian control and poor management meant that Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway was unable to fulfil any of the precepts of BNG. It failed to deliver quality or affordable housing. Cost overruns predictably put the rents out of reach of those living in Joe Slovo. At handover an average of R165 957 had been spent per Phase 1 unit (SHF, 2006) with costs continuing to spiral. Yet to be calculated are the cost to the state of successive rehabilitation initiatives, loss of revenue from the rent boycott and the recurrent management costs incurred by Thubelisha and the HDA in the absence of a social housing institution to manage Joe Slovo Park. More than five

years after the social housing precinct was first occupied by tenants, the HDA was still working to address structural defects in the housing. Without a social housing institution there was an accelerated decline in the maintenance of the housing stock and no capacity to manage social housing occupancy.

Phase 1 failed to alleviate poverty and served to exacerbate it, as families from Joe Slovo were displaced to Delft. The project undermined rather than promoted social cohesion, as contestation between informal settlement residents and backyarders intensified and as the flats were finally occupied by people from outside Langa. It widened existing social divisions within the informal settlement itself and stimulated the emergence of new social fault lines. Overall the singular focus on the N2 Gateway within Langa widened the incipient social schism between Langa borners and migrants, as the former complained of marginalisation. The absence of an allocations policy and criteria entitling shack dwellers and other Langa residents to housing in the N2 Gateway, coupled with perennial processes of shack numbering and renumbering, created intense uncertainty. This created spaces for backdoor schemes that offered the possibility to jump what was a notional housing queue. Perhaps the only positive outcome of Phase 1 was some measure of spatial restructuring within Langa, even if the social housing stock had been traded up to those who could afford it and subsequently captured by its occupants as a free asset which generated revenues through sub-letting. The widening gap between the plan and its outcomes in Phase 1 led to the increasing spikes in contestation and protest, culminating in the N2 highway occupation followed by the state's move to evict residents of the informal settlements. This drew the curtain on the new human settlements imaginary, prompting the intervention of the courts, the collapse of Thubelisha, the advent of the HDA and a change of Minister in what is now a familiar story.

But this is still a meta-analysis with a strong statist and techno-managerial bias, which offers a partial explanation of megaproject failure. It provides few insights and lessons for development practice other than familiar insights into the pitfalls of technicist planning, the consequences of simplification and standardisation, the homogenisation of community and the dangers of a thin analytics of power.

The enlargement of theory requires the formulation of a series of theoretical propositions which draw on the conceptual framework and findings from the empirical research to illuminate the fault lines delineating the clashes of rationality, the interplays and reversals of power. These demand particular ways of seeing which enlarge and enrich the conception of conflicting rationalities and their relationship with claims on space, place and belonging.

### **7.3. Theoretical propositions**

The N2 case study has followed Li in attempting to bring together elements which are normally kept apart by developing an “analysis of governmental interventions (their genealogy, their diagnoses and prescriptions, their constitutive exclusions) and analysis of what happens when those processes become entangled with the processes they would regulate and improve” (Li, 2007b: 27). This entanglement of rationalities, together with the contradictory impulses that energise the formal and the informal, lie at the heart of the theoretical insights afforded by the N2 Gateway, which is a potent example of what Robins has described as the enduring fantasy of South African planners and policy makers of “dramatically transforming and standardising the everyday urban spaces of ‘the poor’” (Robins, 2002: 513). The theoretical propositions made here, based on the analysis of the research findings as presented in Chapter 6, are the following:

### **7.3.1 Proposition 1: The rationalities of state–poor encounters valorise the formal, interpreting informality as a marker of state impotence and dysfunctionality**

The N2 Gateway has turned out to be less about housing and much more a story about state encounters with informality and with representations of poverty and progress. Informality has frequently been evoked by state actors as a marker of state impotence and failure. This is evident in President Mbeki's endowment of shacks with subhuman bestial associations – dwellings fit for chickens or pigs and an outgrowth of the apartheid past – which provided the underlying narrative for the subsequent 'war on shacks' declared by Minister Sisulu in 2004. This sense of state impotence has arisen in the face of rapidly growing informal settlements and has become increasingly emblematic of the "dream deferred which explodes" (Gevisser, 2007: xxxi).<sup>41</sup> The rise of these settlements is increasingly seen as a vector of indignity, testimony to a city which works only for a wealthy minority, a continuing mark of shame on and incipient threat to society. Governmental rationalities expressed through linked discourses of control and improvement have found it hard to accept evidence that many of the chronically poor urban dwellers and the rural migrants who seek to retain linkages with their home areas could not afford the recurrent costs associated with formal housing. The realities of structural poverty do not fit well with the imaginaries of human settlements policy, which acknowledges the need for informal settlement upgrading but slips back into discourses of eradication. The imperative to formalise appears as a fundamental tenet of

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<sup>41</sup> The introduction to Mark Gevisser's biography of Thabo Mbeki recalls how the former president cited the Langston Hughes poem *Harlem* which asks "What happens to a dream deferred?" in order to illustrate the dangers in "the crisis of expectation of black South Africans who found themselves often with even less than they had before and thus on the brink of a dangerous explosion" (2007: xxxi)

governmental rationality which segues into the impulse to impose order as a prerequisite for improvement.

### **7.3.2 Proposition 2: State rationalities associated with the ‘will to govern and improve’ gravitate towards the promise of megaproject solutions which clash with the adaptive logics of informality and carry a high risk of failure**

The story of the N2 Gateway provides important insights into the cluster of rationalities associated with the state and its surrogates, and the ways in which these conflict with the forces which shape the adaptive rationalities of the urban and migrant poor living in conditions of informality. The “high politics” (Jennings, 2012) of the megaproject return again and again to propose the construction of houses at scale, as a monocular and decontextualised solution to structural poverty. It is instructive that the most recent statements by Minister Sisulu (reappointed as Minister of Housing in 2014 – the year which she had set as the deadline for the eradication of shacks ten years earlier) contain no reflections on the possible reasons for the ‘failure’ of this state undertaking. Despite the many problems associated with the N2 Gateway, the future approach remains rooted in the quantum of houses to be delivered and reconfirms the persistent allure of megaprojects and the enduring mythologies of the developmental state, “because in this way the economies of scale will be in our favour [and] in these megaprojects there will be a collaboration of all three spheres of government” (Department of Human Settlements, 2014). These inevitably clash with situated and contingent logics of the urban and migrant poor.

This suggests a theoretical interplay between the resilient imaginary of the developmental state and groupings of the urban and migrant poor living in conditions of informality, which is conceptualised in Figure 8 below.

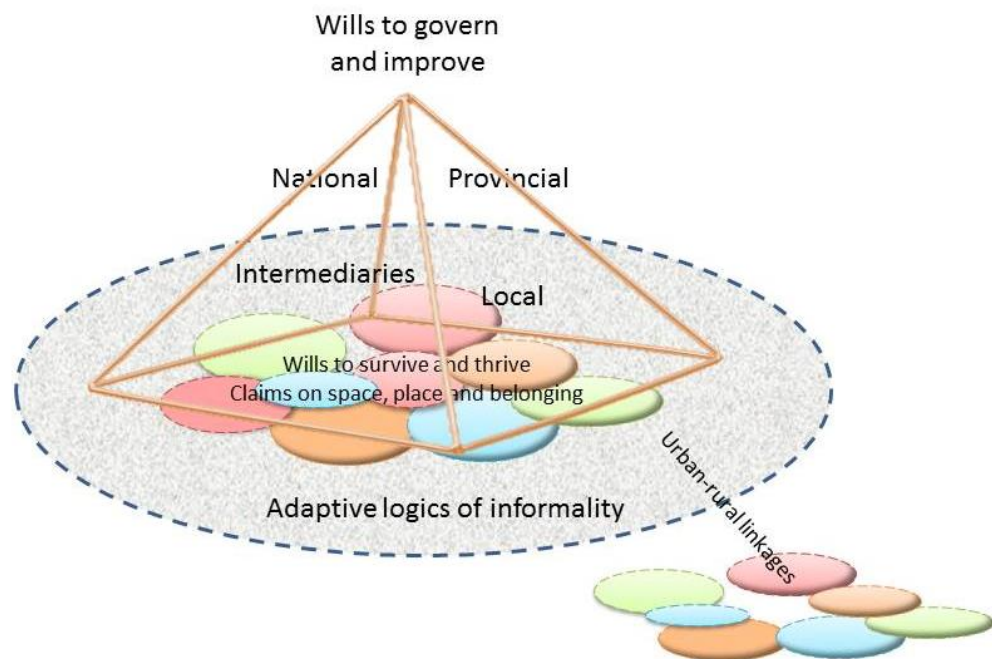


Figure 8: The imaginary of the developmental state and its engagement with urban informality

The N2 Gateway case study provides valuable insights into the construction and operation of the post-apartheid 'developmental state'. It poses the question of how people living on the margins and in conditions of informality fit within the modern schema of biopolitics, particularly that dimension of it which involves the "division of the population into subgroups that will contribute to, or retard the general welfare and life of the population" (Dean, 2010: 119). The image of the developmental state which emerges through BNG and the discourses of the N2 Gateway evokes geometric and functional alignment between spheres/tiers of state and its trustees and private sector partners. It foregrounds the relations between power, rationality and technical knowledge. In this conceptual rendering the 'will to govern and improve' is conceived as a stamp which is brought down to erase, regularise, formalise and thereby dignify the informal. The base of the idealised developmental state is sharp-edged and a perfect square, representing the apparatus associated with its vision, policy, strategy and plans and the ways in which these are reflected in the

imprint of the grid symbolising ordered space. Confident in this knowledge, it seeks to set itself down firmly, cutting cleanly through the informal complexities of claims on space and place, overlooking the socialities of belonging, the nature of livelihoods and rural-urban linkages which it seeks to compress into the provision of a housing unit to reduce asset poverty and delivered at scale. The practice, as the case of the N2 Gateway so richly illustrates, confirms the dysfunctionality of this instrumental rendering of the developmental state. As Figure 8 suggests, the attempts by the state to overlay the complex spatial and social patterning which constitute the social fabric of informal settlements with blanket criteria that determine qualification or exclusion from future housing, in a context where waiting lists are a governmental fiction, provide instant recipes for conflict. They fail to conceptualise urban-rural linkages, and risk displacing those who have managed to thrive and who no longer qualify for inclusion in state schemes of improvement.

### **7.3.3 Proposition 3: State-led urban project imaginaries can expose multilateral contestations of power within the state and amongst and between groupings of the poor with conflicting claims on space and place**

The pluralities of wills to govern and improve originating in different spheres of the state, which find expression in the megaproject, embody divergent political interests and volatile relations of power. The desired neat articulation of spheres of government and their intermediaries as envisaged in intergovernmental relations discourse remains a fiction. By contrast, in the first phase of the N2 Gateway spheres of government actively sought ways to frustrate each other, resulting in constant shifts and reversals of power within the state itself as officials dug deep into their regulatory armouries in search of apparatuses of mutual restraint.

When Foucault cautioned that the wide array of elements and instruments associated with the apparatus of the state does not secure its dominance and power,



he was examining the state as a discursive totality in relation to society. The case of the N2 Gateway provides insights into the workings of that section of the South African state which is responsible for housing and urban policy. It reveals fundamental fractures in its functional unity, as state entities in different spheres manoeuvre to secure relative advantage in the claiming of success or handing off responsibility for failure of housing delivery. This casts new light on Ferguson's conception of the *Anti-Politics Machine* in which state officials cast themselves in the role of "politically neutral artisans" (1994: 178) who advance a conception of government as a "machine for delivering services, not as a political fact" (ibid.). Elements of this discourse persist – particularly in the processes of trying to neutralise and render technical the politics and contestation triggered by the implementation of the N2 Gateway in Langa. However, it is notable how the N2 Gateway strips the covers from the political facts of inter-governmental relations and exposes the contestations over the exercise of power *within* the state, which have both political and institutional dimensions. The case highlights the need to re-theorise inter- and intra-governmental relations in order to provide a more nuanced understanding of the actual practices of statecraft and the exercises of power within the state.

The depiction of the social base in Figure 8 suggests the fragmented and frequently contested nature of social relations in urban space. The N2 Gateway in Langa highlights the persistence of deep-seated social differentiation, complex social networks and extended survivalist strategies which span urban and rural space. These are largely silent in policy and remain poorly understood and under-researched.

#### **7.3.4 Proposition 4: Megaproject engagement with ‘community’ reflects broad neglect of the social, precipitating challenges and the possibility of power reversals**

Informal settlements in the post-apartheid city constitute social environments of deep complexity with conflicting centres of power and contesting and overlapping claims on space, place and belonging. Current policy and practice either ignore this complexity or seek to address it by employing homogenising exhortations of ‘community’ and consensus-based planning approaches which are blind to power and ill-equipped to deal with conflict. The N2 Gateway in Langa has exposed the inherent thinness of the concept of ‘community’ deployed by the state. This remains largely untheorised within policy. In the project context it is reduced to attempts by state actors to secure notional representation of ‘community representatives’ within invited spaces (Miraftab, 2004; 2009). The N2 Gateway highlights how the lacunae with respect to ‘community’ engagement were deeply embedded in the rationalities of megaproject delivery. This entailed a broad political and technical masking of the social which overlooked history, simplified ‘community’, sterilised complexity, obscured claims on space and place and ignored rural-urban linkages. In the case of the Phase 1 flats the needs of the new ‘community’ and the requirement for a managing social housing institution were completely ignored, which directly contributed to the hijacking of the buildings and loss of control by agents of the state. This effected a reversal of power which was long lasting and which has proved difficult to reset.

Planning for Phase 3 twinned generic renderings of ‘community’ with fuzzy notions of ‘participation’ which, despite the experience of Phase 1, remained restricted to aims of improved project efficiency and effectiveness. This may have enabled progress in the short term but ensured that over time the N2 Gateway would face a

series of intractable problems which would spill over into the township as a whole in the future.<sup>42</sup>

As has been examined in this study, the mounting threat of displacement posed by the N2 Gateway Phases 1 and 2 triggered an upwelling of resistance and protest action intended to make those perceived to be holding power “come closer”; Von Holdt et al. (2011) have described this type of action as “the smoke that calls”. The story has been told above of how protests against the marginalisation and removal of Joe Slovo residents, without any guarantee of return, were met by state-initiated court action to secure their eviction that was eventually referred to the Constitutional Court. The intervention of the Court, which upheld the eviction, required that the state enter into ‘meaningful consultation with the community’ to negotiate their removal. However with the change of tack to proceed with an *in situ* upgrade after all, the Project Steering Committee provided the state with the means to interface with the ‘community’ in achieving the security of a legislated space which was indisputable, as in this instance it was the result of litigation by groupings in the informal settlement. This court-sanctioned institutionalisation of the concept of a ‘community’ served to formalise ‘community leadership’ in the eyes of the state and began a process to ensure their incorporation into the megaproject and governmental apparatus. The *quid pro quo* was to ensure that leadership would be well positioned to allocate housing. Leadership incorporation served to increasingly isolate these leaders from their base, and inducted them into new roles in which they were required to ‘render technical’ and relay explanations of state strategy in exchange for their inclusion. This provided the state with a means to deflect blame for subsequent problems back onto the deficiencies of ‘community’ leadership and their perceived failures to represent and communicate the human

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<sup>42</sup> In July 2014 Langa has been the site of large and violent protests which signal widespread dissatisfaction with housing allocations and fragmented development initiatives.

settlement imaginary. This precipitated counter-claims by those who argued that they had been excluded, which initiated a new cycle of incorporation.

### **7.3.5 Proposition 5: The shack is no longer axiomatic of informality**

The N2 Gateway enables examination of the proliferating logic of informality and how this logic is not restricted to the built environment, taking on new forms even after shacks are reabsorbed into the grids of the formal. Informality extends to social practices with the capacity to penetrate and redraw the formal. This reveals the essential porosity and elasticity of the informal which is at the core of its insurgent energy and adaptive capacity to digest or deflect schemes of improvement that seek to enclose or displace it. This porosity and flexibility are what gives informality its power and potential to erode or inflict reversals on the designs of the state. The state-facilitated takeover of Joe Slovo Park by tenants and a new class of informal landlords represents a variation of the informalisation of the formal. Likewise the state's expectations were that the medium-density units delivered in Phase 3 would make them immune to alteration because of the way they had been designed. However it is worth recalling how a resident interviewed in a recently occupied unit in Phase 3 had already effected 'alterations', knocking out part of an internal wall, and spoke of her plans to try and extend outwards into limited public space. This evokes Stephen Robins' analysis of the similarly named Joe Slovo Park in Milnerton a decade earlier, which observed how the housing scheme "was now barely distinguishable from the informal settlement that was demolished to make way for it... a rude reminder of the failure of planners, policy makers and developers to acknowledge the complexity and heterogeneity of everyday social life and lived experience"(Robins, 2002: 511). This suggests that informality is a social response to poverty and marginality, one that seizes opportunities to enlarge social and economic space and forms part of an expanding clash with the rationalities of control and order championed by the state.

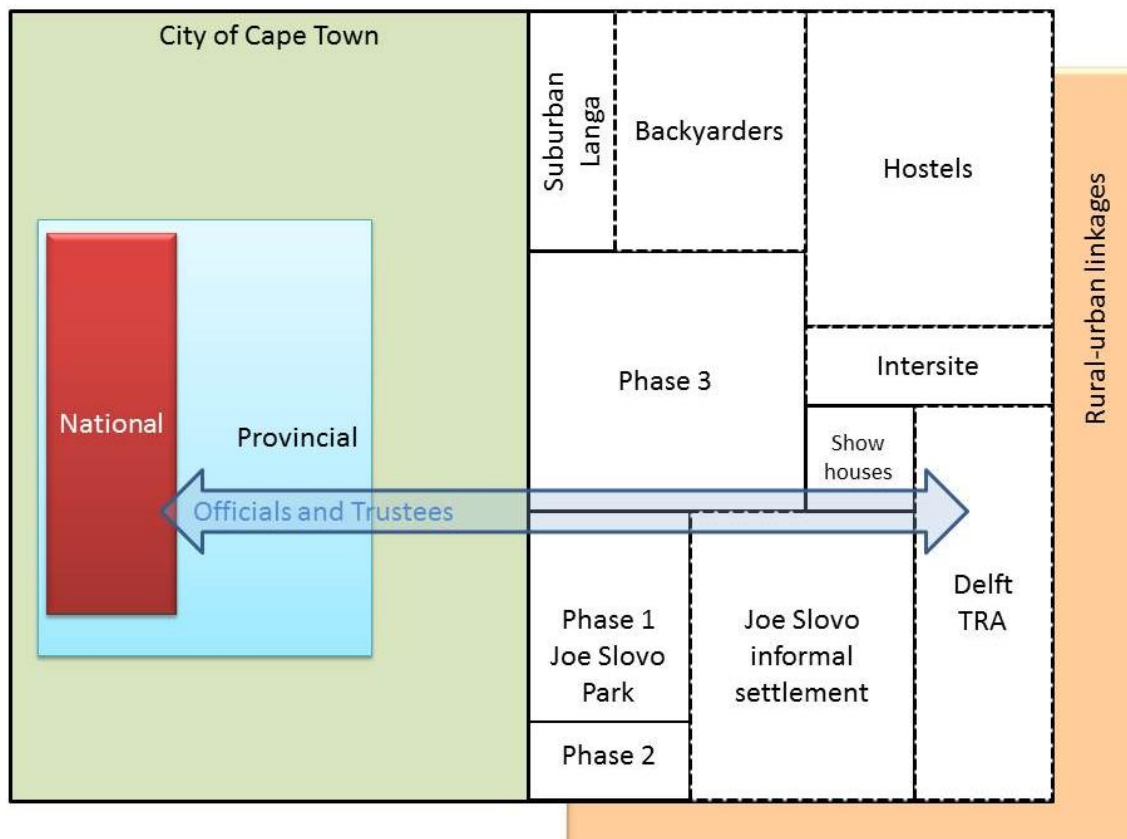
### **7.3.6 Proposition 6: Institutional and social complexity overwhelm the rationality and practices of the developmental state**

Flyvbjerg's case study of the Aalborg Project draws attention to Nietzsche's description of "the doctrine of Hamlet", which holds that "knowledge kills action; action requires the veils of illusion" (Flyvbjerg, 1998: 321). This indicates that state actors have a vested interest in downplaying complexity, which has little place in policy and programme design as it inevitably blurs the legibility desired for these scripts. But this complexity cannot be wished away, as action under the "veil of illusion" quickly leads to failure or unintended consequences.

The split screen which continually multiplies and subdivides singular renderings of reality has emerged as the defining motif of the paradigmatic case of the N2 Gateway in Langa. It provides an optic to help identify and conceptualise complexity and anchor conflicting rationalities in contested urban space. It reveals the many faces of the 'state' and 'community', providing a metaphor to visualise their internal divisions and changing interactions. This helps to make visible the simultaneous interplays between diverse actors across their respective locales in institutional and social space who are marshalled into the megaproject script.

The left side of the screen is the primary domain of the "molar structures" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) of government from which the interventions of politicians, officials, technicians and associated trustees are launched in their various bids to govern and improve. This follows Foucault (2004: 301), who conceptualises this domain as "a dynamic ensemble of relations and syntheses that at the same time produces the institutional structure of the state and the knowledge of the state". The rendering of this screen and the composition of its 'molar' institutions is much simplified in Figure 9 below, as each sphere of government contains a multitude of departments and sub-departments. These accumulate in a bewildering proliferation of organograms populated by different actors engaged in the complex of political,

administrative, regulatory and budgetary functions and relationships that are at the heart of governmentality. The vast majority of state actors remain invisible behind the screen, servicing the systems and internal workings of biopolitical order, unseen animators of the discourses and practices of government, cloistered from those the state seeks to govern and improve.



**Figure 9: The split screen as organising motif of the N2 Gateway in Langa**

From the perspective of the N2 Gateway the most relevant components of the state are those that choose to “see” the urban and rural poor (Corbridge et al., 2005). These include the high-level political leadership for whom the poor also assume periodic significance as voters. This stratum primarily views the poor from afar, examining them through a succession of different lenses to assess their relative wellbeing by means of statistics assessing employment, education, health, poverty, inequality, homelessness, and access to services. However political leadership remains reliant

on an entourage of advisors and officials in national, provincial and local government who interpret trends and are charged with the design and implementation of the programmes. They also rely on locally elected councillors to be the most proximate face of government for citizens. Together these functionaries oversee particular services and administer various “technologies of rule” (ibid., 2005) in the form of plans, budgets, regulations, systems and procedures which are at the core of biopolitical order. In addition to the immediate sectoral functions associated with housing and development planning at the national, provincial and metropolitan scales, the left-hand screen contains windows into the operations of the legislature, which has held hearings and passed Bills relating to the operations of the N2 Gateway; the judiciary, which has adjudicated court actions and passed judgments relating to the case; and the office of the Auditor-General, which has conducted investigations into the management and governmental conduct of the project.

The state performers in this notional ensemble, who supposedly perform their functions as part of the joined-up policy agenda of the developmental state, rarely if ever play together as a coherent institutional orchestra. At best state they are supposed to align their functions and actions under the direction of an abstract conductor in the guise of the principle of co-operative government. They may have some awareness of each other’s scores but the case reveals how they often play unseen and unrehearsed in the collective institutional dark.

This proliferation of governmental screens, each a domain of actors and functions, is customarily homogenised and given the shorthand of ‘the state’. It remains opaque to the residents of Langa and Joe Slovo who, in the case of the N2 Gateway, encounter its emissaries and programmes of improvement in a largely random and haphazard manner but quickly experience the reality that its public undertakings and plans are not to be trusted. It is also important to record that across these

domains the primary language of power and the source code of governmentality is English. This is frequently the determinant selecting those who are able to converse across the primary split screens.

The right-hand screen projects that which is frequently compressed as 'the community' but which represents the entry points to a maze of "dense" and "diluted" spaces (Kolb, 2008; Bank, 2011), which in the context of the N2 Gateway constitute the historical base map of Langa. Contemporary overlays provide the broad contours of micropolitical contestations over place and belonging in the township. As the narratives reveal, these contestations take many forms and are embedded in the social relations and the mix of formal and informal tenure systems which are the invisible gateways to access living spaces and land. The boundaries and relative 'densities' of these spaces have been enlarged or compacted with the emergence of the new locales created by the N2 Gateway and the movements of people between them marked by the progressive erasure of the informal settlement. Many of the people in the spaces marked with dotted lines in the schema above are connected to each other through social networks of different kinds which include linkages with rural areas in the Eastern Cape through ties of varying strengths. This further splits the screen to project patterns of rural-urban migration and their relationship to urban informal settlements, which suggests that the characteristics and meanings associated with the rural homestead and its occupants fill one half of the frame while the urban shack and its occupants and meanings occupy the other. Acknowledgement of the frames in this split screen makes it possible to explore the nature of the connections joining the two locales and their significance in shaping particular choices related to the 'will to survive and thrive'. This conception elevates the nature and strength of the linkages between people staying in informal settlements and the rural areas of the Eastern Cape as an important theoretical



dimension shaping particular rationalities of informality, and their encounter with state schemes of improvement.

The simultaneity of the narratives recounted across the various screens, and the fact that their languages and registers are not all mutually intelligible (some requiring subtitles or signers to reveal their meaning), creates impenetrable zones of unintelligibility among the many voices competing to be heard. It is this often bewildering complexity which fuels state and social engines of mutual simplification in attempts to reciprocally condense the narratives of the state and 'the community', and to make sense of the interactions between them. This gives weight to the observation that the "whole life of policy is a chaos of purposes and accidents" and not a matter of "rational implementation" (Clay and Shaffer, 1984), which accurately characterises the processes in the N2 Gateway and the multiple clashes of rationality it has engendered.

#### **7.4. Developing planning theory and practice cognisant of the rationalities of informality in the post-apartheid city**

The final research question allows for a more grounded assessment of what the experience of the N2 Gateway means for planning theory and practice. It asks how the analysis of these multiple actor gazes, competing claims, shifting frontiers and reversals in relationships of power, and divergent and overlapping rationalities can propose to planning theory and development practice an approach to urban policy and planning theory that is more cognisant of the rationalities of informality in the post-apartheid city, and incorporates "the conflict, ambiguity and indeterminacy characteristic of actual social life" (Holston, 1998: 46).

The experience of the N2 Gateway underlines the need for a planning theory and approach which foreground the recognition of conflict and difference and the existence of contending claims on space and place. This suggests a Southern-

inflected agonistic planning approach which specifically sets out to identify and mediate conflicting rationalities. Such an approach is place-led. It examines the interplay between politics, power and space. It is premised on conflict, contested knowledges and meanings and is adaptive and pragmatic in its quest for pragmatic deal-making (Mouffe, 1999; Hillier, 2003; Watson, 2009). It requires the development of an in-depth understanding and acknowledgement of competing centres of power. This approach explicitly challenges the assumptions of mainstream planning theory with its simplifications of community, silences on practices of politics and power, presumptions of consensus 'win-win' solutions and the notional social stabilities presumed to flow from the provision of housing and concomitant eradication of aberrant shacks.

The case of the N2 Gateway strongly indicates the need to foreground historical investigation as a basis on which to theorise the changing dynamics of power in space. This requires that proposed development interventions engage as much with the past as they do with the present and the future. As has been demonstrated, planners and implementers of the N2 Gateway in Langa failed to properly understand its present and largely ignored its past, zeroing in on designated project space and excising it from its context. This was a reflection of the overarching dynamics and impetus of the megaproject which immediately closed off avenues for such an enquiry.

This question can only be addressed through a speculative identification of alternative approaches. If the N2 Gateway was equipped with a rewind button and was not subject to megaproject expectations of instant delivery, retrospective analysis suggests an alternative strategy that might have had a different outcome. Such a strategy could have commenced with an analysis of the social and housing history of Langa. This would have:

- identified the factors framing the Cape border *amagoduka* social divide;

- built on the deeply inscribed, socially intelligible geography of the different zones within the township as a basis for highlighting and prioritising locality-based social issues and needs;
- examined the changing nature of rural-urban linkages which are the reciprocal feeders of informality and rurality;
- obtained a closer understanding of the demographic and livelihood strategies of Joe Slovo residents, hostel dwellers and backyarders.

This strategy would have reconceptualised the N2 Gateway, rethinking the megaproject approach and locating the intervention within a Langa-wide programme of redevelopment, which engaged with the township as a historical and contemporary social entity. With respect to the informal settlement and associated pockets of informality in other settings, this would have provided a basis for:

- assessing the pros and cons of a strategy involving a land rights enquiry, with a view to identifying existing informal rights in land and criteria for securing tenure upfront, and the extent to which this would assist in stabilising and self-regulating zones of informality;
- examining existing social networks, livelihood strategies, affordability levels and relations of power, and the extent to which people settled in localities within the settlement drew on social ties which connected back to rural space;
- reviewing the extent to which such networks could have advanced local self-organisation or would have exacerbated existing divisions and contestation.

Such an approach could have contributed to a combined social and technical assessment of the options for consolidating the reblocking and service provision initiatives already in place, or replanning and formalising the settlement in ways which best accommodated people on the land and made use of well-located space.

Assuming that social housing would still form part of a possible mix of options, this would also require much more clarity about the institutional requirements for management and a sharper profile of who would be able to afford the rentals for such housing. Institutional development would need to precede construction so that tenants would be more carefully selected and management arrangements for the units would be in place. Tenants would be insulated from defects by much more rigorous quality control during construction and prior to occupation.

The case highlights how contestation and difference are internalised *within* the state and social axes, as well as at their points of intersection, where the broader conflict of rationalities and deep differences are seen to emerge. This suggests that conflicting rationalities are pervasive in both social and institutional space. The study has revealed how this is true of the Langa space, but an analysis of conflicting rationalities would also require a molecular assessment of the molar structures and key institutions within different spheres of the state. This would contribute a two-tier analysis of the state that could be used to identify the alignments and disjunctures between high-level policies, programmes and plans and the state actors who influence the politics of direct encounter with those it seeks to govern and improve.

Such an approach has to effect a divorce from the grand narratives of the human settlement and developmental state imaginaries, and sidestep the impulse for rapid delivery through the megaproject paradigm. The revised politics of encounter would dispense with homogenising notions of community and rule-governed communicative rationality. It would require methodologies which allow planners to listen better, and to map webs of connection, points of contestation and the essential markers of change over time.

This would allow for some possibility of a strongly grounded and adaptive approach which recognises essential features of informality in the post-apartheid

city. It would need to better address rural-urban linkages and their shaping of urban informality, and lead to a more rigorous understanding of the urbanisation of poverty and its connections with a degraded countryside. The rural hinterland, despite its deagrarianisation and chronic marginalisation within a deindustrialising economy (Du Toit and Neves, 2007) remains an important centre of meaning and shaper of identity, while for many it still constitutes the locus of home.

## **7.5. Conclusion**

This chapter has reviewed the central research question and provided an analysis of the “performance paradox” of megaprojects to identify what can be learnt from the challenges and failures of the N2 Gateway. The chapter has reflected on the analysis in order to make six propositions to enlarge the framing theory. These propositions theorise how informality has been seen as a marker of state impotence and dysfunctionality and how this fuels the logic of megaprojects which promise impact at scale. They show how megaprojects are destined to fail to meet their objectives, as they constitute theatres of contestation which discard the social and ignore existing claims on space, place and belonging. The ways in which megaprojects conceive of and engage with ‘communities’ trigger conflicts that contain the possibility of significant reversals of power. While informality evokes the image of the shack, the case study shows that informality can also penetrate the formal sphere. Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway provided the petri dish in which to grow a new culture of rogue informality which resulted in elite capture of the rental stock and its sub-letting for private benefit. Overall the case suggests that complexity soon overwhelms the imaginaries, rationalities and practices of the developmental state, which is conceptually and practically reliant on simplifications. The final section of the chapter has reflected on the lessons from the case study, in order to set out elements of an indicative approach to engaging with the complex and dense township spaces where past and present collide.

Reflecting on the value and theoretical contributions of the case method, Flyvbjerg makes a strong statement that “there does not and probably cannot exist predictive theory in social science. Social science has not succeeded in producing general, context-independent theory and, thus, has in the final instance nothing else to offer than concrete, context-dependent knowledge”. He goes on to note that the “force of example” is underestimated (Flyvbjerg, 2007: 228).

This study has set out to explore deeply and present the case of the N2 Gateway which, it is argued, can make a contribution to the enlargement of planning theory and which provides a potent force of example to point the way “in which planning can work with informality, supporting survival efforts of the urban poor rather than hindering them through regulation or displacing them with modernist mega-projects” (Watson, 2009: 2268).

# Chapter 8

## CONCLUSIONS

### 8.1. Introduction

This final chapter condenses the overall significance of the case study, critically reflects on the research process and suggests directions for future research before making brief final remarks on the insights afforded by the case.

### 8.2. Significance of the study

The N2 Gateway was conceptualised to pilot a new human settlements imaginary which almost immediately collided with the complexities of the social world in Langa and revealed important defects in the conception of the 'developmental state'. Despite fundamental flaws in design and implementation of the N2 Gateway and the controversy it generated, the logic and promises of the megaproject remain at the heart of policy and strategy within the state, reinforced by indicators of success that are reliant on narrow quantitative measures. The analysis of the case reinforces the observation that:

*Power determines what counts as knowledge [and] what kind of interpretation attains authority as the dominant interpretation. Power procures the knowledge which supports its purposes, while it ignores and suppresses that knowledge that does not serve it.*

(Flyvbjerg, 1998: 319)

The study shows how the practices of government actively filter out complexity and construct simplified images of poverty and the poor which give traction to grand

narratives of development and megaproject solutions. The significance of the case derives from its attempt “to hear the world and make sure it can speak back” (Thrift: 2008: 18). This approach has guided deep, theoretically framed listening to the multiple voices of actors in the orbit of the state, and those it seeks to govern and improve. These voices give form to counter-narratives which challenge the dominant interpretations at the heart of governmentality and the simplifications on which they depend.

At the meta-level, the case does more than expose the shadow side of the human settlements imaginary and the attempts to give it form in the township of Langa. It provides important insights into the thinking that shapes the workings of the aspirant developmental state and the continuing failure of policy to ask fundamental questions about the place and legitimate expectations of the migrant and informal poor in the post-apartheid city. The case provides a locality map showing the intersection between “the government of poverty and the arts of survival” (Du Toit and Neves, 2013: 1). It enables an examination of the associated rationalities of actors in the state and groupings of the poor which vie for right of way. The case illuminates the landscapes of struggle of the urban poor and the different forms which their claims on space, place and belonging can assume. This contributes to understandings of informality and its place within the repertoire of survival of the urban poor, and how this is counterposed with the technical and communicative rationalities informing contemporary approaches to development planning, infusing them with the tangled actualities of power, anchored in the particularities of context.

### **8.3. Reflections on the research process**

Three reflections emerge from the research process. The first is that the reticence of actors in the state to extensively contribute perspectives on the case can be considered to have limited its findings. Overall the scale and scope of the case, and



the extent of the cast drawn together in its performance, have inevitably meant that certain voices and perspectives have been excluded, which may have influenced the depth of the findings and the nuance of the analysis. While this has been largely offset by extensive analysis of documentary sources relating the planning and implementation of different phases of the N2 Gateway to surface a range of state voices these lack the immediacy and candour generated by the interviews.

Secondly, as Guba and Lincoln (1981) have observed, case study research poses particular ethical questions to the researcher which surface in their engagement with data and the rigour of their processes for ensuring the trustworthiness, validity and reliability of their findings. While strategies to code and triangulate data and ensure essential corroboration were put in place, there are still choices and judgement calls to be made to distinguish those narratives that have explanatory power to confirm or contradict the theoretical framework from those which do not appear to have this potential. This requires ongoing reflexive analysis of individual bias. It also recognises that the weightings given to individual voices and particular pieces of evidence in qualitative research are also in part a reflection of the intense compression that must be applied to distil raw data within the discipline of a set word count. This study has wrestled with this particular challenge in a bid to balance breadth with requisite depth.

Thirdly the research undertaken in the course of the case study has corroborated the uneasy silence that exists about language, translation and transfers of meaning in cross-lingual settings, and their articulation with the broader complex of “things unsaid” which shape the conditions of knowledge production (Pillay, 2009). It is suggested that this is an area which requires much closer attention in the academy and within the qualitative research community.

## **8.4. Recommendations for further research**

Despite a variety of rich and in-depth conversations with people staying in the informal settlement, there remains a sense that the lived realities of the “mud, shit and fire” (Zikode, 2013) of shack life remain experientially remote, and that the nature of the articulation between urban and rural domains is only partially perceived. This calls for a different type of focused and longitudinal ethnographic research which directly explores the linkages between urban informal settlement dwellers and their changing relationships with the varied rural settings which many regard as home. This has great potential to cast new light on the nature of informality in the post-apartheid city and to address a silence in relation to the contemporary nature of circular and permanent migration. Likewise the specific character of space and place, and the determinants of belonging in established urban settings, require further investigation.

## **8.5. Conclusion**

The conduct of research is a humbling experience. It provides a deep appreciation of the complexities that have confronted state, civil society and Langa actors with the advent of the N2 Gateway. Perhaps it is the overwhelming nature of this complexity – the torrent of voices, the intense clash of histories and rationalities, the dynamics of power, the conflicts precipitated through the wills to govern and improve which are challenged in turn by the informal arts of survival of the migrant and informal poor – that is at the heart of the compulsive impetus within the state to simplify, render technical and invest in the power of the plan and the allure of the megaproject. However as the study shows, planning and state development interventions which fail to utilise the optic of the split screen to develop a more sophisticated understanding of contending rationalities, the workings of power, the logics of

informality and the history of claims on space and place are destined to become familiar with the taste of failure.

# Appendix 1

## Spatial images and conversational threads

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### About this appendix

Appendix 1 provides information on the images used in the interview process with all informants in Langa and the majority of actors outside it. The three-step interview process drew on three sets of images:

- an A3 Google Earth image of Langa as a whole (A00: 2010);
- a set of year-on-year Google Earth images of change in Langa (A01 – A11) drawn from the historical imagery slider in Google Earth spanning the period 2000–2010;
- a collection of found images depicting aspects of life in Langa, (B01 – B20) used as a basis for conversation consistent with the methodological approach outlined in Chapter 3.

### Introducing the broad spatial frame

The basic spatial framing of the conversation was established through examination and discussion of a laminated A3 colour Google Earth image of Langa dated 30<sup>th</sup> November 2010. The image simulates an ‘eye altitude’ of 2.43 km and provides an overview of the township as a whole. This was used to provide an orientation and contemporary spatial context for the interviews. From the outset the conversation was directed towards the split screen breaking of this frame, in order to locate informants from Langa on the map and discuss their surroundings, histories of occupation and trajectories of migration as appropriate. In the case of officials the

image served to locate their involvement and the focus of their engagement, which influenced how they saw and read the space. It enabled the break-up of the frame through the identification of institutional affiliations and particular interventions in space.

## **Examining change on the ground**

Following the orientation provided by this A3 image, which provided a preliminary indication of the location of the informant's own frame within the overall frame of Langa, conversation shifted to an examination and discussion of a numbered set of aerial images of Langa 2000–2010 of which the first (A01: 2000) is taken from a helicopter looking south along the eastern strip containing a portion of Joe Slovo informal settlement, while the remainder ( A02–A11: 2001–2010) are screenshots of Google Earth satellite images focusing on Langa south of Washington street (although the framing of the image shifts slightly between the screen shots). These images were sourced from the historical imagery slider in Google Earth which is not without certain problems, as the image sequence is irregular – i.e. the images cannot be compared at exact chronological intervals. The 2005 Google Earth image (A06) in this sequence includes most of the northerly portion of Langa as well.

The series renders the spatial chronology of changes on the ground, primarily linked to imprints on space of Joe Slovo, the phases of the N2 Gateway and the renovations associated with the Hostels to Homes programme within Langa. Table 1 below indicates the image reference, provides a brief description of what the image depicts and sets out an indicative set of conversational threads used for exploration as appropriate. These threads are designed to situate the conversation spatially and to break the frame by enabling informants to locate themselves, and to discover and discuss events, issues and struggles driving visible and invisible changes in space and place. These conversations quickly begin to reveal situated knowledges and

diverse ways of looking at this world constitutive of the underlying rationalities of the informants. In this exchange the researcher is an actor and contributes to the conversation, pointing out changes in the space, posing questions and telling stories which evoke informant perspectives or which allow them to remain silent.

## Images and linked lines of inquiry

Appendix 1 — Table 1: Core Google Earth satellite image sequence and linked chains of inquiry

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
A01: 2000	Undated image taken from a helicopter looking south along the eastern strip of Joe Slovo informal settlement, under the electricity pylons and bounded by Vanguard drive and Isilimela School, after a portion of the settlement had been destroyed by fire on 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2000.	Origins of Joe Slovo Informal settlement fires and their causes Perspectives on the frequency of fire in Joe Slovo Declaration of a National Disaster State perspectives on disaster risk and measures to combat informal settlement fires Informal settlement management
A02: 2001	Google Earth image dated 14 <sup>th</sup> March 2001, at eye height of 1.89 km, depicting Langa south of Washington Street. Shacks on western edge of settlement built right up against boundary lines of bonded houses in Settlers. Shacks rebuilt in burnt area, with evidence of blocking out initiative in north-east corner of settlement. Eight blocks visible with construction	Blocking out and technical rationalities Attempts to control settlement pattern and density Services Impacts of services on densities Surveys and databases Subversion of controls Social relations between Langa borners and <i>amagoduka</i> – rural migrants with social roots and homes in the Eastern Cape

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
	of interlinking tracks.	
A03: 2002	Google Earth image dated 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2002. Blocking out now extended throughout the settlement. A buffer zone cleared between Settlers and the informal settlement.	<p>Progress in blocking out</p> <p>Canalisation and engineering solutions</p> <p>Buffer zones and social conflict</p> <p>Attempts to control settlement pattern and density</p> <p>Provision of services</p> <p>Impacts of services on densities</p> <p>Siting of toilets – technical and social issues</p> <p>Surveys and databases</p> <p>Subversion of controls</p> <p>State sightings of ‘the community’</p>
A04: 2003	Google Earth image dated 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2003. Image very similar to 2002 image. However red roofs in New Flats area indicate hostels refurbishment in progress.	<p>Links between Hostels to Homes and N2 Gateway projects</p> <p>Displacement as a result of upgrading</p> <p>Implications for informal settlement densities</p>
A05: 2004	Google Earth image dated 13 <sup>th</sup> May 2004 shows portion of land cleared on western edge of Joe Slovo informal settlement. Extension of Hostels to Homes in Welcome Zenzile hostel.	<p>The clearance process in Joe Slovo</p> <p>Claims on space and place</p> <p>The planning of the N2 Gateway</p> <p>Early thinking about the N2 Gateway</p> <p>Changing intergovernmental relations and shifts in party dominance</p>

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
A06: 2005	Google Earth image dated 7 <sup>th</sup> September 2005, at eye height of 2.6 km, provides an extended but incomplete view of the settlement to the north. There appears to be an error in the dating of this image as the January 2005 fire damage is not apparent.	<p>Use of satellite imagery and aerial photography</p> <p>Monitoring and surveillance</p> <p>Missing images from visual narrative</p> <p>Data sources and accuracy</p>
A07: 2006	<p>Google Earth image dated 28<sup>th</sup> October 2006 indicates major changes with the completed construction of the N2 Gateway Phase 1 flats and footprint of January 2005 fire</p> <p>Also visible is the area adjacent to Phase 1 of N2 Gateway cleared for FNB gap housing and a section later used for the construction of show housing for Phase 3.</p>	<p>N2 Gateway social/rental housing</p> <p>Thubelisha homes</p> <p>Changes in N2 Gateway project management responsibility</p> <p>Planning, design and affordability</p> <p>Allocations and beneficiary selection</p> <p>Build quality of N2 Gateway</p> <p>Management of social housing</p> <p>Phase 1 rent boycott</p> <p>Relations with informal settlement dwellers and expectations of occupancy</p> <p>Fire displacement and responses</p> <p>Hostels to Homes project</p>
A08: 2007	Google Earth image dated 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2007 indicates start of construction in former hostel	Responses of Joe Slovo residents to marginalisation with respect to flat



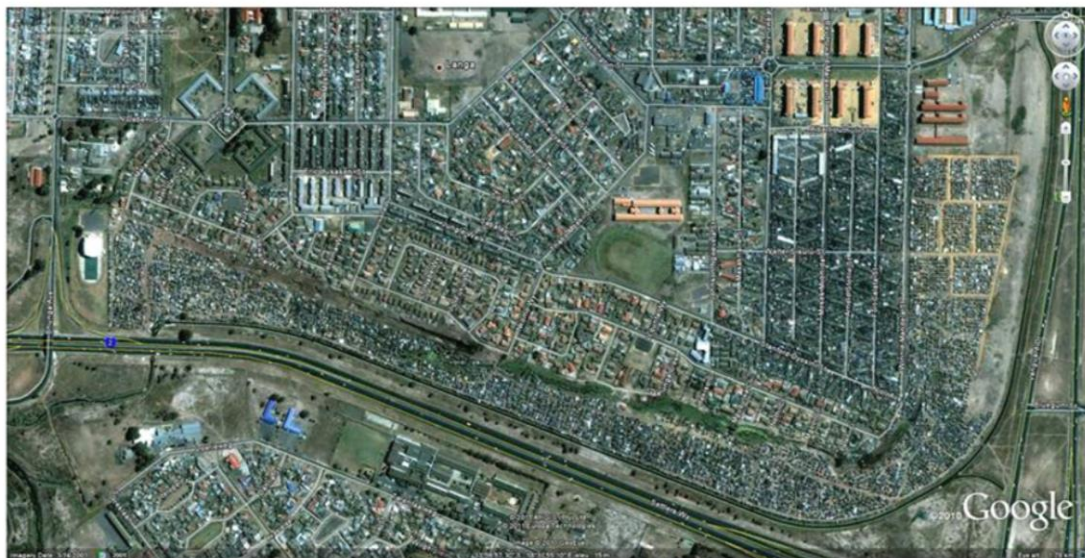
Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
	section burnt out in 2005 fire along eastern edge of Langa, bordering informal settlement.	<p>occupancy criteria and plans to construct bonded gap housing in Phase 2</p> <p>Occupation of N2</p> <p>Hostels to Homes refurbishment</p> <p>Displacement through upgrading</p> <p>Technical rationalities intergovernmental relations and alignment of plans</p> <p>Sightings of the state and state proxies such as Thubelisha Homes</p> <p>Application to evict Joe Slovo residents</p>
A09: 2008	Google Earth image dated 14 <sup>th</sup> August 2008 shows start of construction of FNB gap housing adjacent to Phase 1 flats.	<p>FNB gap housing and target market</p> <p>Perceptions about why scheme remains unoccupied</p>
A10: 2009	Google Earth image dated 11 <sup>th</sup> September 2009 shows completion of FNB gap houses and adjacent show houses.	<p>Perceptions about Phase 3</p> <p>Show houses</p> <p>Densification</p>
A11: 2010	Google Earth image dated 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2010 shows no immediately discernible change from the photo a year previously.	

## Google Earth satellite images

### A00: Langa township 2010

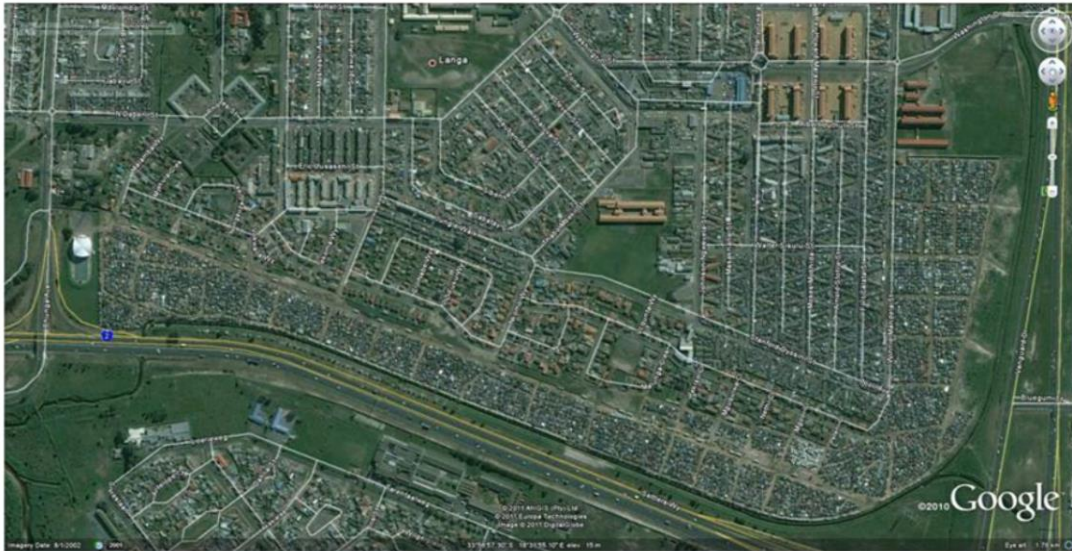


### A01: Joe Slovo and southern Langa 2000

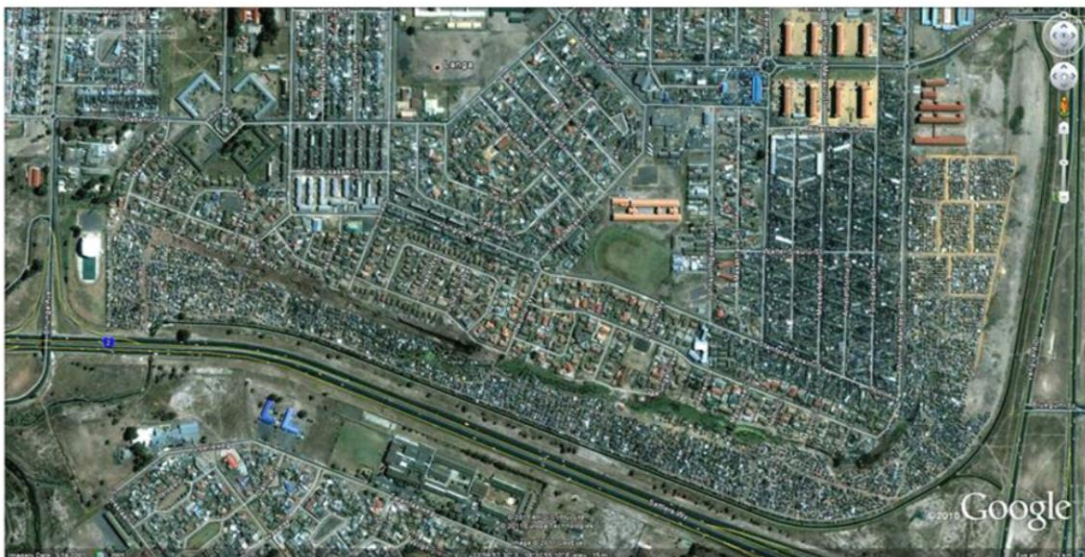




## A02: Joe Slovo and southern Langa 2001

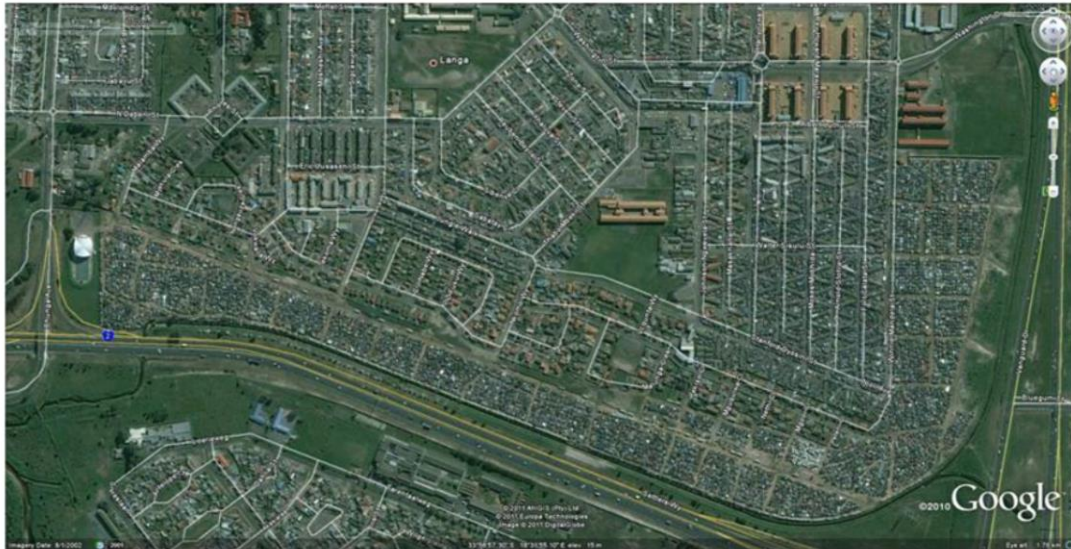


## A03: Joe Slovo and southern Langa 2002

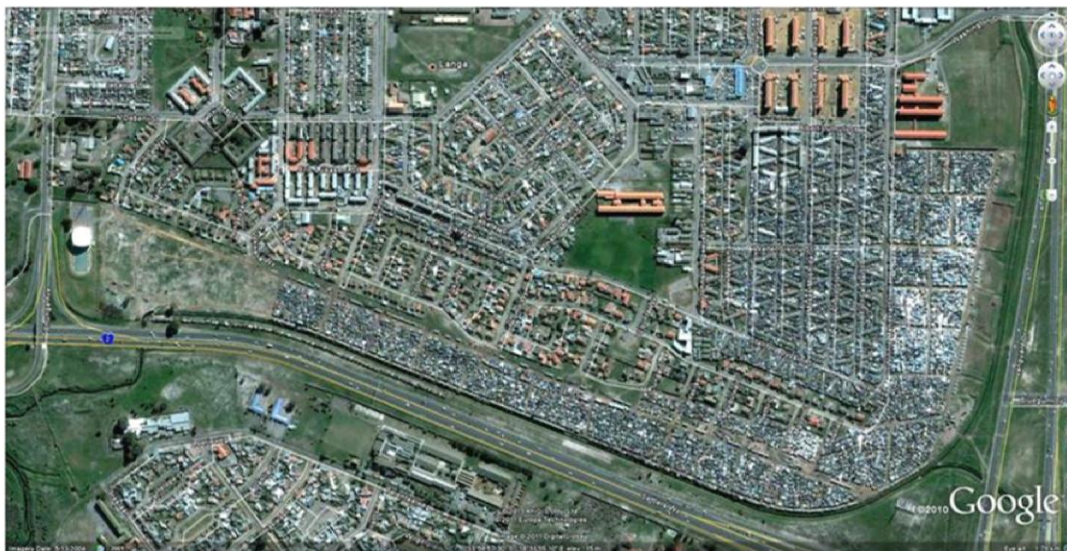




#### A04: Joe Slovo and southern Langa 2003



#### A05: Joe Slovo and southern Langa 2004

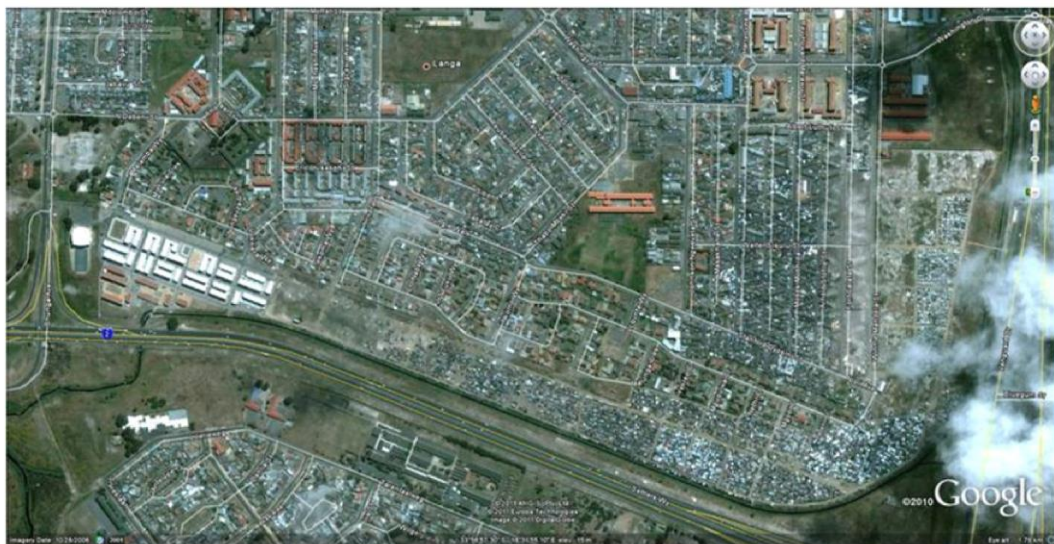




## A06: Joe Slovo 2005



## A07: Joe Slovo 2006





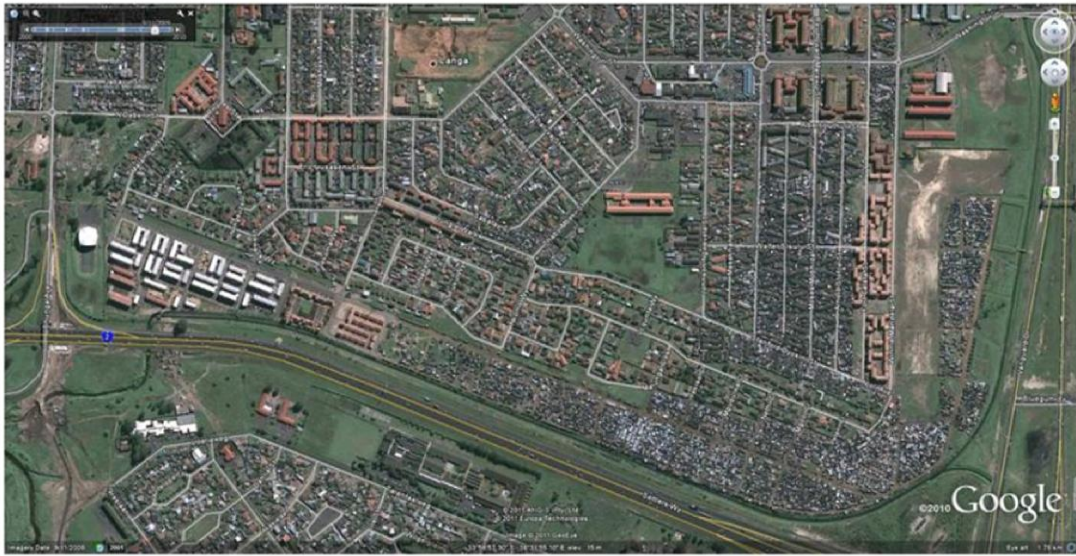
## A08: Joe Slovo 2007



## A09: Joe Slovo 2008



## A10: Joe Slovo 2009





## A11: Joe Slovo 2010



### **Found photographic images as a trigger for informant narrative**

The final part of the conversation involved examination and discussion of a book of 20 colour images. An additional final image in this sequence depicted an empty frame captioned: "What is missing?" These images were shown to informants from Langa and officials alike. The colour images are numbered but do not contain explanatory captions. They depict scenes from Langa or which are connected thematically with particular events or situations in Langa relevant to the research focus. These visual materials are all 'found images' selected from Google Image searches or extracted from the Google Street View component within Google Maps. The images were not purposively organised in any particular chronological or narrative order. Table 2 below provides a descriptive index to the images used, and an indication of the potential range of conversational threads and chains of enquiry suggested by the individual images. Some of the images were selected to reprise



themes and issues already addressed by others within the set. This enabled recursive loops within the conversations that were useful for revisiting, corroborating and amplifying/amending earlier statements.

**Appendix 1 — Table 2: The photo sequence used as the primary basis for eliciting actor narratives**

<b>Image reference</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry</b>
B:01	Three young boys facing the camera with open space behind them on which informal dwellings are visible.	Bringing up children in the context of an informal settlement
Photo: David Harrison, 2009. <i>Mail and Guardian</i> Feb 20-26 2009, Vol 25, No 6. Downloaded from <a href="http://www.southernafricatrust.org/b4d/documents&gt;Returns_on_the_CSI_rand.pdf">http://www.southernafricatrust.org/b4d/documents&gt;Returns_on_the_CSI_rand.pdf</a>		
B:02	Rural Eastern Cape village scene containing a mix of homestead configurations and dwelling types. People are gathered at the dwellings in the foreground for an event of some kind. Goats are in a kraal.	Rural-urban linkages Migration histories and urban livelihoods Employment Rural life and perspectives on social cohesion Rural homesteads Family remaining behind Rural remittances Perspectives on home, identity and belonging Rationalities of informality
Photo: Joseph Carr, 2008. <i>Settlements in Transkei Province</i> . Downloaded from <a href="http://joetourist.ca/SouthAfrica/2008-drakensberg.htm">http://joetourist.ca/SouthAfrica/2008-drakensberg.htm</a>		
B:03	A shack fire in Joe Slovo – flames, smoke and scores of people looking on, standing next to furniture and personal	Informal settlement fires, their causes and impacts The aftermath of fires and people's ability to

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
	belongings which they have rescued from the dwellings.	reclaim their spaces Displacement as a result of fire Attitudes of other Langa residents to shack fires Sightings of the state Perspectives of officials on informality and risk Responses to informality
Screen shot from video <i>Fire and Water</i> , 2002 directed and produced by Liz Fish for City of Cape Town and World Summit on Sustainable Development		
B:04	Architectural model of Phase 3 of the N2 Gateway rendered with trees, green space and double-storey dwellings.	Immediate responses to the image and what people see represented there Assessing the possibility that they will be accommodated in the new development Comparisons between how they are staying at present and what the new development offers – advantages and disadvantages Qualification criteria – eligibility Non-qualifiers and what will happen to them Registration, allocation procedures and perspectives on databases Sightings of the state and related communication
Image: HDA. N2 Gateway, 2011. A photographic update No. 3. Downloaded from <a href="http://www.thehda.co.za/galleries/entry/n2-gateway-a-photographic-update-no.-3-july-2011#/5">http://www.thehda.co.za/galleries/entry/n2-gateway-a-photographic-update-no.-3-july-2011#/5</a>		
B:05	Generic protest. Women carry handwritten placards and Abahlali base Mjondolo banner.	The threat of eviction in Joe Slovo Perspectives on related protest action,

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
		<p>involvement and responses</p> <p>Occupation of the N2 freeway and what led to this and subsequent actions</p> <p>Perspectives on local organisation within the informal settlement and the identification of and relationship between different organisational formations</p> <p>Perspectives on conflict</p>
Photo: <i>West Cape News</i> , 2008. Downloaded from <a href="http://westcapenews.com/?p=152">http://westcapenews.com/?p=152</a>		
B:06	<p>Crowd sit-in with placards outside High Court in Cape Town. Printed placards read: 'No forced removals to Delft' and 'We will remain in Langa'.</p>	<p>Court actions</p> <p>Constitutional Court challenge</p> <p>Perspectives on and understanding of Cape High Court and Concourt rulings</p> <p>Sightings of the state</p> <p>Responses of the state to the rulings</p>
Photo: <i>Cape Town Anti-war Coalition</i> , 2007. Downloaded from <a href="http://capetownantiwar.blogspot.com/2007/09/photos-of-joe-slovo-community-protest.html">http://capetownantiwar.blogspot.com/2007/09/photos-of-joe-slovo-community-protest.html</a>		
B:07	<p>Woman with baby in front of informal dwellings</p>	<p>Perspectives of women and mothers on life in the informal settlement</p> <p>Space and place</p> <p>Bringing up children</p> <p>Access to social grants</p> <p>Settlement demographics</p>

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
		<p>Social relations and neighbours</p> <p>Perspectives on informality</p> <p>Rural-urban linkages and the nature of 'households'</p>
Photo: <i>West Cape News</i> , 2009. Downloaded from <a href="http://westcapenews.com/?p=841">http://westcapenews.com/?p=841</a>		
B:08	Aerial view of area affected by 2005 fire, which burned a large portion of the informal settlement as well as several single-storey hostels and backyard shacks erected in the Zones.	<p>Perspectives on this fire</p> <p>Impacts of fire on livelihoods</p> <p>Perspectives on displacement within Langa to Intersite and Blikkiesdorp TRAs</p> <p>Resultant claims on space and place</p> <p>Relationship between informal settlement dwellers and occupants in the Zones</p>
Photo: City of Cape Town Disaster Management Unit, 2005. Downloaded from <a href="http://www.hedon.info/BP56:HouseholdEnergyPovertyAndParaffinInSouthAfrica">http://www.hedon.info/BP56:HouseholdEnergyPovertyAndParaffinInSouthAfrica</a>		
B:09	Chemical emergency toilets and refuse in close proximity to informal settlement dwellings	<p>Living conditions</p> <p>Perspectives on services</p> <p>Types of sanitation and their siting</p> <p>Rationale for demolition of toilets</p> <p>Gendered perspectives on sanitation and services</p> <p>Sightings of the state</p> <p>Maintenance in hostel settings</p> <p>Linkages between settlement and neighbours</p>

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
Photo: Photographer and source unknown <sup>43</sup>		
B:10	New Flats Hostel scene. Unrenovated flats in foreground, renovated flats in background. Washing, building rubble, wheelie bins mid-image and old cars in foreground. DIY electricity connections from lamppost in courtyard.	Hostel life and living conditions Space and place Migration trajectories Hostel dwellers in the social fabric of Langa Different hostel settings – state and ‘grey’ hostels and related living conditions Social organisation Histories of occupancy Access to space Tenure security Implications of Hostels to Homes upgrading Displacement to informal settlement Connections between hostels and informal settlement, movement between them Social relations Sightings of the state Expectations that displaced hostel dwellers would get access to housing through N2 Gateway
Photo: Photographer unknown, 2010. Downloaded from <a href="http://abreastinaboat.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Township-Tour-Langa-Mens-Hostel1.jpg">http://abreastinaboat.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Township-Tour-Langa-Mens-Hostel1.jpg</a>		

<sup>43</sup> Every effort has been made to trace and attribute images. However in some instances links no longer exist and the image has been untraceable.

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
B:11	Billboard announcing “N2 Gateway: Joe Slovo Phase 3 Coming Soon!” Artist’s rendition of houses, wide street, parked cars. Tag line “Slums shall be abolished”.	<p>Responses to the billboard image and anchor message</p> <p>Perceptions of the Phase 3 development and who would gain access to these houses</p> <p>Allocations and entitlements</p> <p>Disjunctures between image and realities</p>
Screenshot from Google Earth street view 2008, historical imagery slider <sup>44</sup>		
B:12	Newly constructed Blikkiesdorp TRA. Prefab dwellings and toilets behind concrete fencing.	<p>Moving to Blikkiesdorp</p> <p>Perspectives on moving to Delft</p> <p>Perceptions of conditions in Delft compared to those in Joe Slovo</p> <p>Land, its location and impacts on livelihoods</p> <p>Ongoing linkages between Langa and Delft</p> <p>Trajectories of return to Langa from Delft</p> <p>Access to housing</p>
Photo: Gareth Kingdon, 2010. Downloaded from <a href="http://observers.france24.com/content/20100405-forced-live-iron-shacks-because-world-cup-blikkiesdorp-cape-town">http://observers.france24.com/content/20100405-forced-live-iron-shacks-because-world-cup-blikkiesdorp-cape-town</a>		
B:13	Street scene of renovated hostel blocks. Tavern sign, satellite dish, car with boot open unloading stock, minibus taxi, wheelie bins.	<p>Access to renovated units</p> <p>Space and place</p> <p>Business premises in units planned for accommodation</p>

<sup>44</sup> This image was obtained from virtually navigating along the N2 Highway adjacent to Langa in street view mode in Google Earth from 2008 and taking a screen shot of the selected frame.

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
		<p>Displacement</p> <p>Living conditions</p> <p>Livelihoods</p>
Screenshot from Google Earth street view, Langa 2008, historical imagery slider		
B:14	Three women enumerators conducting a self-survey of residents in an informal settlement.	<p>Perspectives on registration, surveillance, enumeration</p> <p>CORC and the Joe Slovo Task Team</p> <p>Task Team and Residents' Committee relationships</p> <p>Shack numbering and its significance</p> <p>Sightings of the state</p> <p>Planning and control</p> <p>Sub-letting and shack rentals</p> <p>Buying and selling of shacks</p> <p>Housing waiting lists</p> <p>Access to housing</p> <p>Exposure of non-qualifiers</p> <p>Visibility and invisibility</p>
Photo: SASDI Alliance, 2011. Downloaded from <a href="https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdinet/6008124286/in/photostream/">https://www.flickr.com/photos/sdinet/6008124286/in/photostream/</a>		
B:15	Gap Housing under construction.	<p>Housing policy and the poor</p> <p>Perspectives on who FNB housing was for</p> <p>Perspectives on why the complex remains empty</p> <p>Perspectives on design</p>

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
		Displacement and territory
Photo: Downloaded from <a href="http://www.agragroup.net/#!_projects">http://www.agragroup.net/#!_projects</a> <sup>45</sup>		
B:16	Generic winter scene of flooded street in informal settlement with people making their way on makeshift stepping stones.	<p>Living conditions and seasonality</p> <p>Sightings of the state</p> <p>Perspectives of officials on shack design and construction and rationalities of informal settlement dwellers</p>
Photo: Gallo Images. <i>The New Age</i> . Downloaded from <a href="http://www.thenewage.co.za/76508-1008-53-Storms_lash_Sasolburg">http://www.thenewage.co.za/76508-1008-53-Storms_lash_Sasolburg</a>		
B:17	Freestanding suburban house in Langa, satellite dish, Vibracrete wall and gate.	<p>Perspectives on social relations between Langa borners and informal settlement dwellers</p> <p>Backyard shack dwellers and claims on housing</p> <p>Perspectives on residents of informal settlement</p> <p>Relations of property and informality</p> <p>Contestations over space, place, access and entitlement to housing</p>
Photo: Hilton Yip, 2010. Downloaded from <a href="https://hcyip.wordpress.com/tag/townships/">https://hcyip.wordpress.com/tag/townships/</a>		
B:18	Spaza shop in informal settlement.	<p>Livelihoods and business ventures</p> <p>Ownership and operation of spazas</p> <p>Patterns of purchase and consumption</p> <p>Presence of nationals from other countries in local</p>

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<sup>45</sup> This is a generic image of double storey low cost housing similar to that constructed in N2 Gateway Phase 2.



Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
		business ventures
Photo: Hilton Yip, 2010. Downloaded from <a href="https://hcyip.wordpress.com/tag/townships/">https://hcyip.wordpress.com/tag/townships/</a>		
B:19	Newly completed block of flats in Joe Slovo Park, N2 Gateway Phase 1	<p>Planning and politics associated with the N2 Gateway</p> <p>Tendering and patronage</p> <p>Social and rental housing</p> <p>Access and perceptions about entitlement to this housing</p> <p>Build quality and conditions</p> <p>Flat life and customary practices</p> <p>Vandalism</p> <p>Narratives of organisation, co-option and power</p> <p>Rent boycott</p> <p>Sub-letting</p> <p>Intergovernmental relations</p> <p>Thubelisha Homes</p> <p>HDA</p> <p>Rectification</p>
Screenshot from Google Earth street view, Langa 2008, historical imagery slider		
B:20	Unidentified interior: Two women washing clothes in a plastic bath indoors. Linoleum on floor. Sheet hanging as a	<p>Domestic life and routines</p> <p>Space and place</p> <p>Washing clothes</p>

Image reference	Description	Indicative conversational threads and chains of enquiry
	room divider. An unwatched TV running in the background, a five-tier pot stand, a kitchen unit and a fridge in background. Plastic pails on the floor in kitchen area. Electricity pre-paid meter on rear wall. Crenulated rear wall indicates possibility that this is a prefabricated TRA dwelling. Plastic crates, two lounge chairs, braai stand made from half an oil drum.	Livelihoods
Photo: Photographer and source unknown		
B:21	Blank image frame captioned "What is missing?"	Mental images and issues of importance to the informant that they would like to raise and discuss.

## The found image sequence

**Image B01: Children in informal settlement**



**Image B02: Rural homestead**



**Image B03: Informal settlement fire**



**Image B04: Architectural model**





**Image B05: Protest**



**Image B06: Resistance to eviction**



**Image B07: Mother and child in Joe Slovo**



**Image B08: The Zones and Joe Slovo after 2005 fire**





**Image B09: Toilets**



**Image B10: New Flats hostels**



**Image B11: N2 Gateway Billboard for Phase 3**



**Image B12: Blikkiesdorp/Delft TRA**





**Image B13: Hostels to Homes upgrading in Langa**



**Image B14: Self-enumeration**



**Image B15: N2 Gateway Phase 2 gap housing**



**Image B16: Winter flooding**



**Image B017: Langa suburban house**



**Image B18: Informal settlement spaza**



**Image B19: N2 Gateway Phase 1 flats**



**Image B20: Women washing clothes indoors**





# Appendix 2

## A socio-spatial history of Langa

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1927 - 1990

### About this appendix

Appendix 2 provides a chronology setting out key trends and developments in the history of Langa from its establishment up to the period immediately prior to the transition to democracy in South Africa.

### The origins of Langa

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Cape Town was home to a fragmented population of Africans of diverse origins. This population included the descendants of slaves from West Africa and Angola, Mozambican dock workers and groupings of Xhosa-speaking people who had migrated from areas of conflict on the frontiers of the Cape Colony (Bickford-Smith et al., 1999; Bickford-Smith, 2001). Maylam has observed that prior to 1923 urbanised Africans comprised just 12 to 13 per cent of the total African population in South Africa. He notes that in this period:

*The low level of African urbanisation was not a result of state enforcement. Indeed the State apparatus for controlling the urban African presence was largely undeveloped before 1923.*

(Maylam, 1990: 57)

While it is technically correct to say that Langa is the first African township in Cape Town, its origins are closely connected to a specially created township Uitvlugt, established in terms of the Locations Act of 1901, following an outbreak of bubonic plague in Cape Town. Uitvlugt was subsequently renamed Ndabeni in 1902 (Burman and Schärf, 1990). Although the establishment of the township was

popularly attributed to white fears that black people living in the poorer areas of the city would be carriers of the disease, Coetzer (2009) has demonstrated that plans to segregate the city were already advanced prior to the outbreak. However this did serve to accelerate removal of an estimated seven thousand Africans resident from various locations in the city to Ndabeni (Maylam, 1995). Conditions in Ndabeni deteriorated sharply over the next decade (Saunders, 1979a; 1979b) and the subsequent 1918 influenza epidemic was a factor which “gave rise to the demand that Ndabeni itself be razed and its inhabitants be removed even further out of town” (Maylam, 1995: 25). The residents of Ndabeni, and Africans residing elsewhere in the city in areas like District Six, were to be accommodated in Langa township, which was established a further three miles from the city, in terms of the newly promulgated Native Urban Areas Act of 1923 (Burman and Schärf, 1990). Although located on the periphery at the time of its establishment, Langa would later be characterised as being “too close to White space” (Western, 1981: 116) as with the growth of the city it eventually metamorphosed into the best located township in Cape Town.

The planning of Langa sought to produce spatial form that would reflect and promote social differentiation amongst Africans living and working in the city. The Commission on a Native Location for Cape Town recognised “three classes of Natives – the temporary or migratory, the permanent or settled and the educated or superior Natives” (Coetzer, 2009: 3). This differentiation also incorporated a particular 19<sup>th</sup> century subtext which concerned social relations between the Mfengu and social grouping among the Xhosa. Mfengu identity was a construction based on “a created ethnonym” (Crais, 1992) to describe Nguni speakers originating mainly from the Bhele, Hlubi and Zizi chiefdoms (Southall and Kropiwnicki, 2003) who had

migrated south after being displaced by the *mfecane/difaqane*.<sup>46</sup> These 'Mfengu' – literally 'hungry people in search of work' – settled among the Xhosa and, as noted by Mostert (1992: 606) have been portrayed as allies of the British against the Xhosa in the Cape Frontier Wars. Bickford Smith recounts how:

*From the 1830's large numbers of Xhosa speaking people lived in Cape Town. Some settled permanently while others remained migrant workers. Many were refugees from the wars on the eastern frontier. The first to settle and find work in Cape Town were hundreds of Mfengu from the Eastern Cape, some with wives and families.*

(Bickford-Smith, 2001: 16)

Mfengu loyalism, including the so-called 'Mfengu pledge' of 1835 to "educate their children, worship God, and remain loyal to the British" (Moyer, 1973: 150), was initially mediated by missionaries and evolved through a complex history. It forms part of a much bigger story of processes of social differentiation and stratification which also embodied different responses within Xhosa society itself to colonial conquest. This differentiation is evident in the polarised social responses of 'believers' and 'non-believers' amongst Xhosa groupings to the exhortations of Nongqawuse<sup>47</sup> in 1857 (Peires, 1989). It feeds into colonial and local constructions

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<sup>46</sup> The *mfecane* (Xhosa) or *difaqane* (Sotho) derived from the Xhosa word '*fetcani*' translated as 'emaciated intruders'. It is commonly used to refer to a period of Nguni migration induced by a combination of drought and colonial incursions in the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the far-reaching social conflicts which resulted. The term and the interpretation of its historical significance are at the centre of ongoing debate within South African historiography.

<sup>47</sup> Nongqawuse was a 15-year-old orphan girl whose millenarian prophecy in April 1856 announced that the dead would arise to help the Xhosa throw off colonial control. However before the 'new people' would rise from the sea, people were exhorted to purify themselves, refrain from planting crops and kill their cattle. Nongqawuse's prophecy was popularised by her uncle Nomhlakaza with

suggesting the characteristics of a 'better class of natives' that evolved as urbanisation accentuated the social distance of Christianised and mission-educated urban elites – Mfengu and Xhosa alike – from unschooled rural Xhosa migrants.

These social fault lines and the different ways in which they have been rendered in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have been the source of acrimonious debate, recently revisited by Bank (2011) who traces the deep contestations concerning the characterisation and narratives arising from these constructed identities. These contestations were initially expressed through a binary which contrasted 'red' people (*abantu ababomvu*) who, it was argued eschewed education, resisted conversion and valorised custom and practice; with so-called 'school' people (*abantu basesikolweni*) (Mayer and Mayer, 1961) who had converted to Christianity, prioritised education and subscribed to modernity. These categories were regarded as the basis for a distinction between 'townsmen' and 'tribesmen'. This "almost primordialist" formulation (West, 1981) was subsequently sharply critiqued by Mafeje (1971), Magubane (1973) and others before being reconceptualised as contrasting 'ideologies of the subordinate' (Mayer, 1980).

As will be examined below, the master narratives that informed the delineation of 'tribesmen' and 'townsmen' were central to the conceptualisation and design of Langa as a node in the migrant labour and subsequent homeland systems, and to the differentiation of 'tribesmen' from those who were urban-born with rights to reside in the city. These narratives have continued to show a remarkable persistence in the post-apartheid and democratic era, where they are re-evoked to justify entitlements to claims on space and place and to privilege urban or marginalise migrant voices. As Roe discusses more generally, "narratives... are treated by many of their tellers

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certain Xhosa chiefs, triggering a complex chain of events which substantially divided and weakened Xhosa society and enlarged the reach of colonial power.



and hearers as continuing to contain some general explanatory or descriptive power even after a number of the specific conventional wisdoms on which they are based are understood to be subject to serious qualification”(1991: 288).

## **The changing socio-spatial logics of planning**

The sequence of images (Figures 1 – 3) presented below provides some insights into the changing relationship between the disciplinary state<sup>48</sup> and the residents of Ndabeni and Langa. The rise and fall of the colonial/apartheid state between the early 1900s and 1994 can be visually inferred from its changing control over, and capacity to regulate, space. Up until the 1970s there is little which can be visibly detected on the ground to indicate a direct challenge to the state’s physical hold on space. But these images may conceal as much as they reveal. Archival sources discussed briefly below provide official perspectives on the web of contestations taking place in the interiors of these structures – the informal uses and appropriations of space *within* the buildings in contravention of state rules and control. This calls to mind the dictum that “the map is not the territory” – attributed to Korzybski but conceptually employed by anthropologist Gregory Bateson (1972: 455 et seq). This suggests that maps and mapping are the registers and outlines of difference; that they function as metaphors for the construction of order but remain abstractions which simplify the complex territories which they can never properly describe. This statement assumes a more literal resonance in this setting where township residents quietly contested the extensive state schemas and technologies of rule in ways which had yet to visibly impose their stamp on space but which featured in the township superintendent’s reports.

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<sup>48</sup> This disciplinary relationship, which was overtly authoritarian and repressive in the period prior to 1994, has taken on new forms in the post-apartheid era under the guise of the disciplinary dimensions of governmentality.

As is examined further below, maps and aerial photographs, while making claims as ‘objective truths’, are not necessarily reliable representations of space as they render invisible the people who inhabit the territories they purport to describe. The partiality of maps and their lacunae in regard to both expert and local knowledge emerge as important considerations shaping the apparatus of planning and the micro-political contestations over space and place which emerge over time. Over the decades, the neat lines and rigid geometries which are the spatial correlates of biopower and systemic order are slowly seen to lose their sharpness, before they are fundamentally challenged and subsequently largely overwhelmed by the intrusion of informality. Little can be reliably inferred from these maps and images about the nature of change in the social relations between people inhabiting fragments of the spatial mosaic of the old and the new Langa. The history of these relationships has to be examined through social ethnographies, oral histories and other academic studies (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963; Selvan, 1976; Kraak, 1981; Molapo, 1994; Field, 2007; Swartz, 2009). Their more contemporary nature emerges through published studies (Ramphela, 1993; Stewart, 2008; Swartz, 2009) and the research conducted for this study discussed in Chapter 5 above.

The decision to freeze construction of family housing for black people in the mid-1950s, coupled with the further collapse of the rural economy in the reserves as a consequence of betterment planning<sup>49</sup> and forced removals<sup>50</sup>, impacted on those seeking employment in the city in different ways. Those without passes were forced to occupy liminal spaces in the township – in hostel kitchens and the backyards – or

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<sup>49</sup> ‘Betterment’ was enforced land use planning in the reserve areas involving the designation of residential, cropping and grazing areas, and was frequently accompanied by enforced villagisation and restrictions on the ownership and grazing of livestock.

<sup>50</sup> Forced removals deprived an estimated 3.5 million people of their prior rights in land, relocating many to bantustans in the countryside and to racially designated group areas in the city.

were forced into informal settlements elsewhere in the Cape Peninsula. The eventual abandonment of influx controls in the mid-1980s was reflected in the accelerated and visible flowering of informality across all township spaces as well as in the establishment and rapid growth of what would become known as Joe Slovo informal settlement from 1992 which is discussed in Appendix 3.

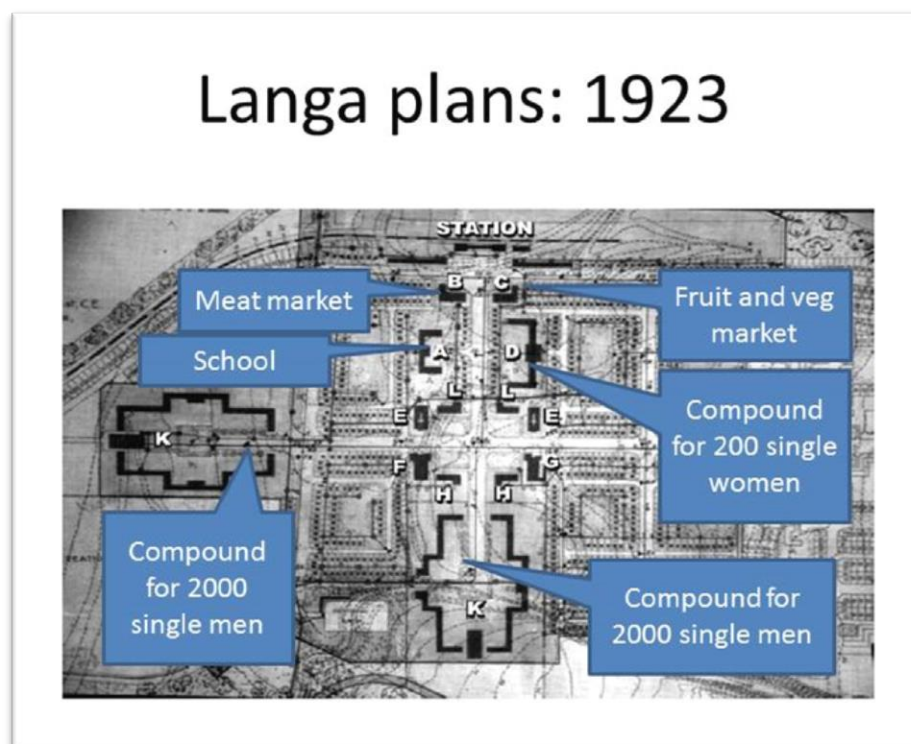
## **The sequence narrated**

Wilson and Mafeje (1963: 7) note that by the time Langa was promulgated as a township in 1927 “there were already men who had been in Cape Town for thirty years and who formed a settled community with sports clubs, and African traders and eating house owners”. Plans for Langa (see Figure 1 below) contained a fundamental bifurcation. Part of the settlement was envisaged as a space with family cottages, churches and markets – a village which was to become the focus of various improvement schemes, including garden competitions and women’s home economics clubs for those who, as Wilson and Mafeje (*ibid.*) observed, “think themselves a cut above their fellows”. The building of 300 married quarters was completed in 1927/28; these provided two-roomed dwellings with outside toilets, served by one communal tap for each four houses (O’Donoghue, 2013: 37).

The main section of the township comprised barracks with dormitories and communal ablution blocks, with the emphasis placed on the containment of single male rural migrants who, on arrival in the city, were processed through a reception and delousing centre prior to being allocated beds. Construction commenced in 1925 of the Main Barracks that would accommodate 2 032 men in 84 dormitories containing 24 concrete bunks in double tiers. The residents of the barracks had access to four separate ablution blocks and an “eating house” (O’Donoghue, 2013: 37). The Special Quarters, which accommodated 200 men and 100 women, were

constructed in the same period. This was followed by the construction of the North Barracks to house a further 840 single men.

From these early years the range of forces influencing and shaping the lives of settled townspeople and migrants residing in the hostels is revealed through their respective strategies of struggle, which balance accommodation and resistance of different kinds.



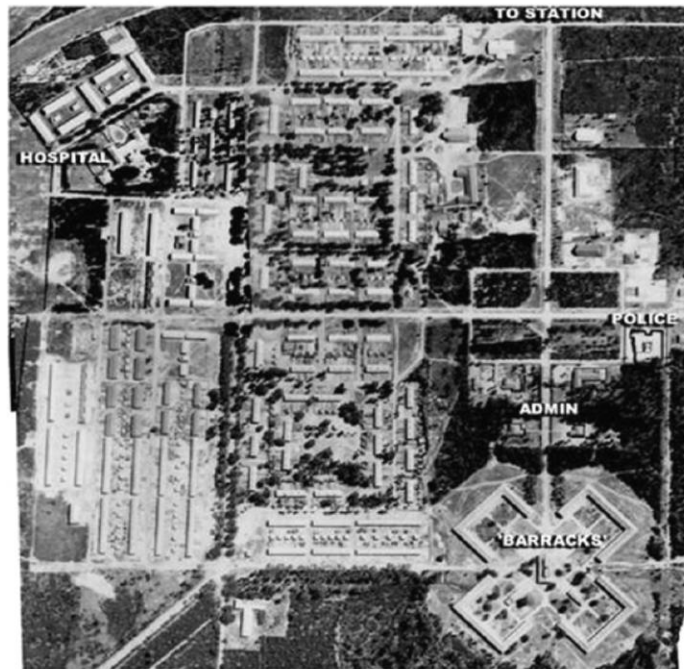
**Appendix 2 — Figure 1: Langa initial concept plan. Source: Cape Archives M3/4005 in Coetzer, 2009**

Coetzer (2009) provides a key to the original layout plan for Langa township prepared in 1923.

## 1930s

This aerial photo from 1935 shows the actual layout of the new township which had been constructed in the former forest reserve.

## Langa 1935



Appendix 2 — Figure 2: Aerial photo of Langa in 1935. Source: City of Cape Town in Coetzer, 2009

As Table 3 below indicates, by 1930 the population of Langa was still very small.

Appendix 2 — Table 1: The population of Langa in 1930 (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963: 1)

Male	Female	Children under 16	Total
1116	324	320	1760

The official literature of the time makes use of various terms to describe shared accommodation for single ‘bachelor’ men and ‘spinster’ women. These include the terms ‘compound’ and ‘barracks’, the etymology of which Weiss (2011) traces to the 1886 closed labour compounds in the Kimberley diamond fields and the construction of concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer war of 1899–1902. The layout of the Langa barracks incorporates design features that echo Bentham’s Panopticon, which Foucault employs as the image expressing a surveillant and

disciplinary space which “induce in the inmate a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power”(1977b: 201).

These characteristics have been examined by Crush (1994) in the context of mining compounds. ‘Hostel’ – a more benign-sounding descriptor – subsequently replaced the military and carceral terminology of ‘barracks’ and ‘compounds’ and became the collective noun which described (and homogenised) all the different hostel variations which would develop over the years.

In 1932 additional married quarters were constructed between Mendi Avenue and Jungle Walk, comprising 48 two-roomed houses with every four houses sharing toilets for men and women, and 16 three-roomed houses with individual outside toilets. These were followed by family units constructed between 1935 and 1941 as part of the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Developments (O’Donoghue, 2013). Archival collections detail the minutiae of township administration and development throughout the 1930s including the holding of garden competitions to encourage civic pride. Another important source of information (albeit strongly filtered by the social character and biases of those making submissions) is the evidence and memoranda presented to the Cape Town hearings of the Native Economic Commission (NEC) in April 1931. Evidence from the NEC provides insight into perceptions about the contemporary will to govern and the tightness of associated administrative control:

*As to the internal administration of the location here, it seems to be thoroughly sound, in fact, so much so that it is sometimes carried out so drastically that the Natives sometimes complain about it.*

(Native Economic Commission, 1930 - 1932: 6846)

Evidence and memoranda submitted to the Commission provide detailed information on relative costs of living and rentals charged at Ndabeni – (4

shillings/month for single men and 10 shillings/month for married men) and in Langa (7 shillings/ month and 15 shillings/ month respectively) confirming why the removal from Ndabeni to Langa was so resented.

The NEC record also provides some insight into the emergence of early micropolitics of representation and nascent claims on space and place. This is evident in the frustration of officials charged with managing the new location and concluding the move of people from Ndabeni to Langa. From very early on (and persisting today) Langa has been perceived by state officials as a difficult and fractious place to work in. The evidence of Sir Clarkson Tredgold illustrates the concerns of officials at the time and their sense of distance from those whose lives they assumed the right to govern and improve:

*It is so difficult really to get at the point of view of the Natives themselves when you are dealing with locations. In the first place, you have this educated class whom we have to communicate with. There are the Galeka<sup>51</sup> (sic) and the Fingoes<sup>52</sup> (sic), two tribes who are always working at arm's length, a sort of peaceful hostility, and you can never get them together. Apparently a meeting of Natives will agree to something when you get them together and a little while after you hear a section saying, "No, we do not agree to that, we were not represented". It is impossible for us to get all sections together.*

(Native Economic Commission, 1930 - 1932: 6849)

Collections in the Cape Archives Repository from this period provide important insights into the preoccupations of state actors and the concerns shaping the business of 'native administration'. Documents detail appropriations for repairs and

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<sup>51</sup> 'Galeka' denotes Gcaleka – a sub-group of Xhosa from the Transkei region.

<sup>52</sup> Mfengu were often described as 'Fingoes' by colonial authorities.

maintenance,<sup>53</sup> the accommodation of visitors,<sup>54</sup> the collection of rentals and proposed measures to deal with defaulters<sup>55</sup> and those “unfit and indigent natives in urban locations”<sup>56</sup>. In 1932 residents represented on the Advisory Board requested that there be different locks on each house.<sup>57</sup>

The various dimensions of the contemporary ‘will to govern and improve’ are evident through the tightening of controls over illicit brewing, which were accompanied by simultaneous proposals for the introduction of garden competitions. Restrictions on beer brewing were effected by an amendment to the Urban Areas Act which outlawed the making, sale and supply of *mqomboti*<sup>58</sup>, other than that which was to be provided through the introduction of municipal beer halls (Centre for Popular Memory, n.d) which came to represent a substantial revenue source for the City (Kraak, 1981).

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<sup>53</sup> 3/CT VOLUME NO 4/1/9/1/94 GN9/21/1/7 Men’s quarters, greater Langa scheme: (A) revised proposals for four blocks men’s quarters; and, (B) alterations to existing eight blocks to increase accommodation.

<sup>54</sup> 3/CT VOLUME NO 4/1/9/1/94 GN9/21/1/8/2/3 Men’s quarters, greater Langa. Complaints by National Council of African women (Langa branch) regarding lack of restrictions on visitors to men’s quarters.

<sup>55</sup> 3/CT VOLUME NO 4/1/9/1/65 GN8/4/6/3 Complaints by Native Residents at Langa regarding rents and seizure of property for outstanding rents.

<sup>56</sup> 3/CT VOLUME NO 4/1/9/1/63 GN8/1/1/5/3 Unfit and indigent Natives in urban Locations: Enquiry re Langa Location by Assistant Native Commissioner, Cape Town.

<sup>57</sup> 3/CT VOLUME NO 4/1/5/1247 REF N44/5 Locks and keys, Langa: Request of Advisory Board for different locks on each house. Ironically this was a request that would be repeated in almost identical form by residents occupying rental flats in Phase 1 of the N2 Gateway in 2006/7.

<sup>58</sup> A home brewed beer made from sorghum.



Nationally the passing of the 1937 Native Laws Amendment Act indicated mounting state preoccupation with influx control, increasing the powers of the Minister of Native Affairs to override municipalities and compel their implementation of the Native Urban Areas Act (Maylam, 1990).

## 1940s

By the 1940s the population of Langa was still modest, although the number of children in the township had started to rise (Table 4).

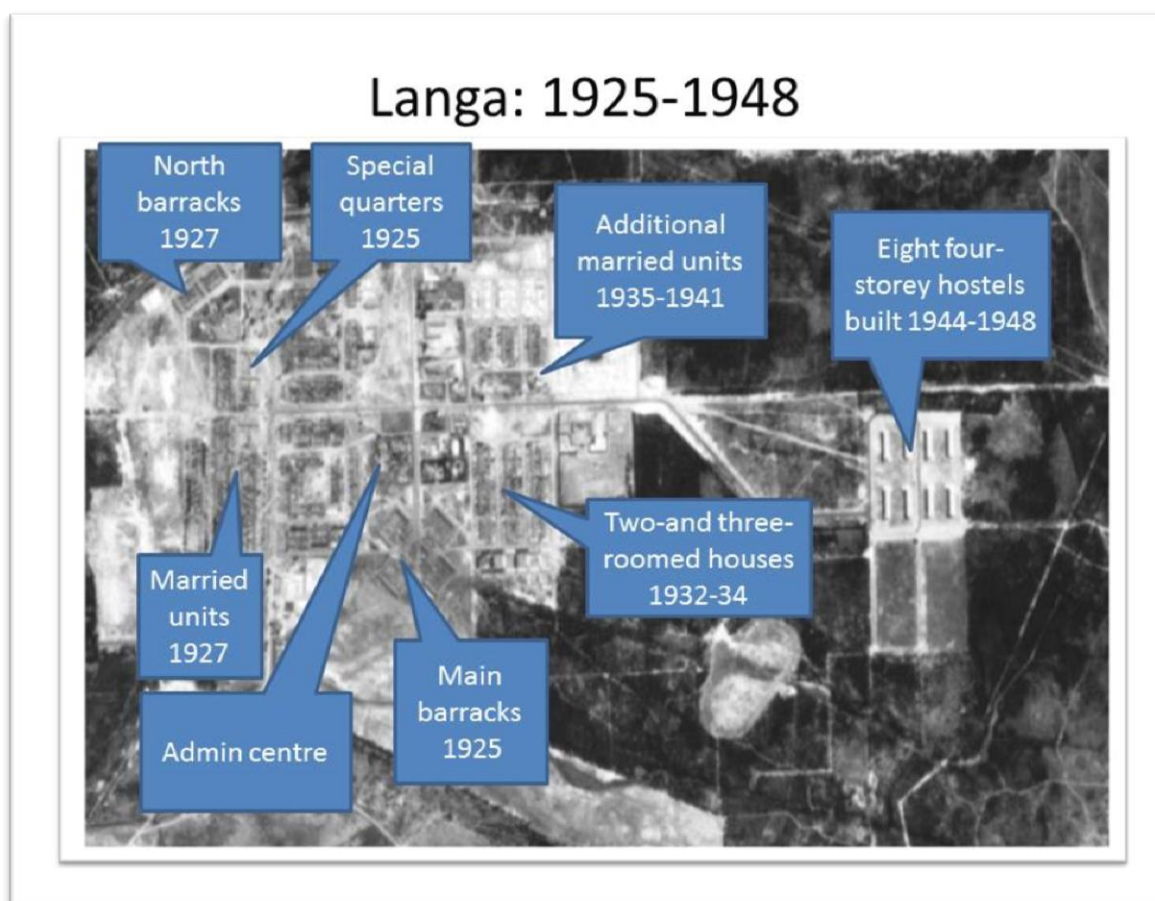
Appendix 2 — Table 2: The population of Langa in 1939 - 40 (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963: 1)

Male	Female	Children under 16	Total
1963	621	1146	3730

Figure 3 below provides a schematic overview of the development of the township since 1925. Between 1925 and 1948 the footprint of Langa expanded progressively eastward, cut out of the remnants of the forest reserve as clearly indicated in the photo, with the construction of the Langa New Flats<sup>59</sup> between 1944 and 1948.

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<sup>59</sup> These four-storey units would later be known as the 'Old Flats' following construction of further 'New Flats' in the 1960s.



**Appendix 2 — Figure 3: Aerial photo of Langa in 1945 with annotations derived from Coetzer,( 2009), Isaacs, (2013) and O'Donoghue (2013)**

According to the 1939 census there were 11,500 Africans in Cape Town. However an influx of people from the rural areas during World War II boosted the population to 38,000 by the end of 1945. By 1941 the population of Langa had grown to 7436. Many of those who could not find accommodation in Langa established 'squatter settlements' elsewhere on the peninsula (Lee-Warden, 1957). Informality was largely displaced to these other locations, although there are mounting indications to be found of contemporary manifestations of the 'will to survive and thrive' in localised bending or ignoring of the established rules by residents in different settings in Langa, which stretched and tested the township administration's will and capacity to govern. Primary sources in the Archives Repository provide an index of the

operations of governmentality, the myriad circuits for the exercise of state power and control, while hinting at the ways in which these were co-opted or subverted.

The 1940s saw the passing of a suite of legislation “so that by the time the National Party came to power in 1948, a whole apparatus for regulating and controlling the movement and daily lives of Africans had already been constructed” (Maylam, 1990: 67). The question of African urbanisation was a central issue in the 1948 election, intensified by the migration spike that had occurred during the war years.

The contestations within the state with regard to the urban question were exemplified in the findings of the Sauer Commission (1947) and the Fagan Commission (1948), with the former arguing for systematic state intervention to reverse African urbanisation and effect “a total apartheid between whites and Natives”, while the latter advocated an “elastic policy” of transitional segregation and a progressive relaxation of the pass system (Evans, 1997). The Fagan Commission reflected Smut’s acknowledgement that:

*Nothing can now prevent further African settlement. We tried segregation but that has not stopped it in the least. The process has been accelerated. You might as well try to keep the ocean back with a broom.*

(Smuts, 1942: 10)

State attempts to tighten control were countered in a variety of ways – through ‘invisibility’ and attempts to evade state controls, the everyday subversion and incremental erosion of state rules and regulations, and well as by a more overt political resistance in the period prior to the Defiance Campaign.<sup>60</sup> Little is reliably known about the social reach and spatial footprint of this organised resistance, and the ways in which it connected or divided the urban residents in the married

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<sup>60</sup> The Defiance Campaign in the early 1950s involved a national non-violent programme of resistance to the implementation racially discriminatory legislation.

quarters and the single men lodged in the barracks and hostels. However there are some indications that the political and economic concerns of rurally focused migrants also found expression in the upwelling of urban political discontent in the 1950s as discussed in the section below.

## 1950s

Table 3 below highlights a growth in the population following accelerated wartime migration.

Appendix 2 — Table 3: The population of Langa in 1949–50 (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963: 1)

Male	Female	Children under 16	Total
6558	1433	3026	11,017

Complex social currents ran through the 1950s into the 1960s. Various improvements were proposed for the urbanised residents of Langa, ranging from discussion of security of tenure for those occupying married units to the installation of telephones in some sections for residents who could afford this service. By contrast many rural migrants experienced an intense tightening of social and economic pressure during this period. The introduction of the Bantu Authorities Act in 1955 began to further redraw the rural political landscape, abolishing the Bhunga council system established in 1894 which combined elected and nominated members. Ntsebeza (2003) observes that the Bhunga system originally intended to undermine the power of traditional authorities who had resisted colonial incursion through a protracted series of Frontier Wars in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A new generation of compliant chiefs was installed, largely dependent on the state and allocated increased powers which completely distorted their social and governance role. This new cohort of state-sanctioned leaders was expected to vigorously implement the hugely unpopular suite of measures associated with ‘betterment’ and rehabilitation programmes introduced in the 1930s, which gained further momentum during the 1950s. In

Pondoland these controls were resisted by the Kongo movement affiliated to the All Africa Convention (Lodge, 1979).

News of these measures and the threats that they posed to rural villages and homesteads was passed up and down the train lines and transport routes by migrants travelling between the hostels and the rural areas. Betterment-related removals and restrictions added a further rent within an already bleached and porous rural social fabric, revealing the increasingly precarious base of the livelihoods of rural people. The measures provoked widespread rural resistance (Lodge, 1979; McAllister, 1986; 1989; Murray and Williams, 1994), and in the early 1960s would ignite retribution by the Poqo insurrectionary movement against compliant chiefs and those deemed to be *abathengisi* (sellouts), in which aggrieved migrants from the Langa hostels played a small but prominent part.

The toxic combination of betterment and forced removals precipitated the collapse of what was left of the rural economy. This in turn fuelled further ‘unregulated’ urban migration, evident in a government request to the Cape Town Council to establish emergency camps for native squatters in the form of a “site and service” scheme in Eastern Langa and Nyanga (Cape Town Council, 1951).

In Langa there was a further expansion of the hostels between 1944 and 1957, when 425 small row hostels, referred to as “cottage type hostel units” or “single storey hostel- type units for bachelor natives” and comprising 850 units, were built to accommodate a further 13,600 single men. This area of development became known as ‘The Zones’ (Selvan, 1976; City of Cape Town, 2012), and expanded the township footprint further eastwards with its characteristic offset open X layout.



**Appendix 2 — Figure 4: Aerial photograph of Langa in 1953 highlighting disciplinary spatial order**

The implementation of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy<sup>61</sup> impacted on people in Langa, who faced a freeze on the building of family housing and the tightening of influx controls. Section 10 of the Native Laws Amendment Act (No. 54 of 1952) specified stringent criteria defining those Africans who were entitled to live permanently in the urban areas and defining all others as “temporary sojourners” in the city. This left people with little choice but to try and evade the pass system which regulated the movement of African people and their access to the city (SAHO, n.d.). This contributed to the infiltration of the backyards and the hostel precincts and the establishment of informal settlements. However none of these activities were yet visible in the exterior spaces and representations of Langa. Indeed the aerial

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<sup>61</sup> This policy reserved jobs in the then Western Province for people of mixed race known as ‘Coloureds’ and further restricted access to the city for African work seekers.

photograph of Langa in Figure 4 above provides the clearest visual testimony of the success of the state's attempt to establish and maintain a sanitised space in a period when the hostel-based migrant labour system was rising towards its height and all manner of surveillance and regulatory measures were coming into force. At the same time the state set out to ensure the spatial isolation and disconnection of townships from the adjacent areas. This was effected through the creation of buffer strips and the use of rail and road links to cut off, as opposed to connecting, space. These buffer strips would become spaces where informal settlements would appear, and in later years would become the focus of the N2 Gateway project.

## 1960s

Appendix 2 — Table 4: The population of Langa in December 1960 (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963: 1)

Male	Female	Children under 16	Total
19,050	2190	4317	25,557

By 1960 the African population of Cape Town was estimated at 75,000. Of the 25,000 people who lived in Langa (Table 4) just over a quarter comprised better paid and relatively well educated urban families living in family accommodation (Lodge, 1978). The remainder were migrant workers living in the variety of municipal and company hostel settings.

Wilson and Mafeje proposed a typology of Langa residents based primarily on “attitudes and values”. This recognised the migrant labourer with varying degrees of schooling who “regards the country as home” and “does not accept town values”; the “semi-urbanised with some education who aspire to become townsmen” but who retain links with the rural areas, and the fully urbanised townspeople who were stratified into “townee/tsotsi” types and “decent people” climbing the rungs of the educated middle class (1963: 15). Wilson and Mafeje emphasised two factors as the primary pathways for social mobility – education and the length of time spent in the

city. These were the drivers enabling longstanding migrants to gravitate towards better quality accommodation and in some cases to move outside the hostels altogether. However there were other factors limiting or enhancing mobility. They also reveal the pre-eminence of “locality of origin” in shaping social formations amongst the migrant grouping (something which is discernible in the social clusters within Joe Slovo half a century later). These suggest the existence of intricate social maps which overlay and interconnect rural and urban localities. Localities of origin tended to be more entrenched in company-run hostels, where workers lived and worked together and remained anchored in space by the bed provided through their employment. As workers employed by the company retired or new jobs became available, so ‘home boys’ were recruited to fill them through mutually beneficial agreements with their employers.

Wilson and Mafeje highlight the bureaucratic predilection for numbers as a mechanism for documenting, recording, controlling and ordering the lives of workers in town – numbers on passes, numbers allocated to authorise residence in hostel blocks, dormitories and beds, numbers on receipts denoting the payment of rentals. They also reveal the subtle appropriation of these schemas by residents, who provided markers of their home location by painting the registration letters of vehicle licence plates from the relevant district on the dormitory doors (1963: 50). Official and unofficial numbering systems coexisted side-by-side – a feature which, as will be shown below, continues to characterise contemporary Langa.

However as the crisis deepened in the rural areas, the formal systems of labour recruitment were increasingly ignored by family members in search of work or seeking to join their husbands and fathers. Instead work-seekers opted for independent access to the city, drawing on social networks within which newly arrived migrants sought out contacts from home as a means to obtain a space somewhere in the complex of the hostels and the Zones (Wilson and Mafeje, 1963;



Lodge, 1978; Ramphele, 1993) or in informal settlements elsewhere on the peninsula such as the Nyanga Emergency Camp established in 1956 (Cole, 1987).

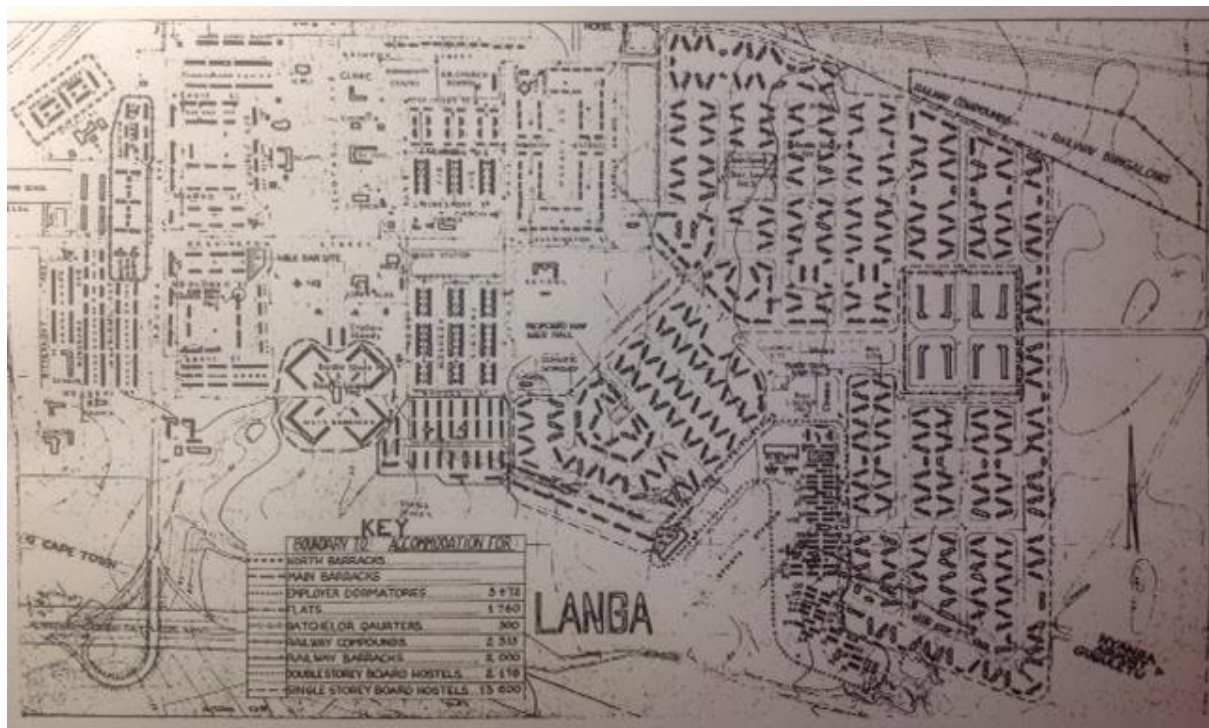
The economic boom in the 1960s saw a further state investment in the hostel system, with the construction of a new higher-density hostel complex adjacent to the Main Barracks and the southern boundary of the Zones that took on the name New Flats. At the same time tightened implementation of the Coloured Labour Preference Policy introduced in the mid-1950s led to a clampdown on the right of women to seek work in the city, and many who had been registered for less than 15 years were endorsed out (*ibid.*).

Given this combination of circumstances, the 1960s marked a brief confluence of rural and urban resistance. The shootings at Sharpeville and at Langa on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1960 ignited a prolonged period of intense contestation, of which the most visible features included a general strike and a march of unprecedented size led by the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) from Langa to the City Hall (Lodge, 1978). As Lodge has observed, “traditionally migrant workers had been ignored by established political parties” (1978: 222) but in the events that followed the march, hostel-based migrants played a leading role with some political and organisational direction from the PAC, which “contemporary evidence suggests...was especially influential in the migrant workers’ hostels and ‘zones’” (Lodge, 1979: 140).

At the same time a state of emergency had been declared in the Transkei – a ‘native reserve’ in the Eastern Cape – to try and counter widespread and increasingly violent resistance and localised revolts (the Pondo revolt, Tembu resistance and Poqo) in response to the imposition of the Bantu Authorities Act (No. 68 of 1951) and the enforcement of ‘betterment’ planning, which had brought immense pressures to bear on an increasingly marginal rural population. Poqo actions were not restricted to the rural areas; in March 1962 Poqo militants were reported to be responsible for the killing of a policeman and the burning of a police vehicle in Langa (SAHO, n.d).

Events in the 1960s illustrate Wilson and Mafeje's observation that increasing restrictions on movement and employment brought migrants and townsmen closer, although the extent to which migrants were "identifying themselves more and more with townsmen on political issues" remains questionable. The issues facing migrants combined rural and urban concerns, of which the former remained opaque to urban dwellers and Cape borers of the day.

## 1970s



Appendix 2 — Figure 5: Sketch map of Langa in 1976 reproduced from Selvan (1976:5)

In the 1970s further evidence emerged of the stratification and segmentation of the migrant labour force, as longstanding migrants with rights to the city also tended to be employed in better paid and relatively skilled jobs compared to their contract worker counterparts. Migrants who qualified for Section 10 status which gave them permanent rights in the city also tended to have better living conditions, having secured rooms in the New Flats, while contract workers tended to remain confined to the barracks and the Zones where conditions were poor. At the same time a

SALDRU review<sup>62</sup> noted that “it should be borne in mind that whereas technically contract workers live singly, in actual fact there are no single quarters in any township which do not have a greater or lesser number of women and children in them” (Selvan, 1976: 3). Selvan also notes that “it is quite impossible to separate contract workers from local men (i.e. those who qualify for Section 10 rights) living in special quarters. The reason is that although contract workers are given specific beds to sleep in, they invariably move around whenever they want, or are able to do so” (ibid.: 5).

Selvan provides a breakdown of accommodation for single men in 1976 (Table 5).

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<sup>62</sup> The South African Labour and Development Unit (SALDRU) is a research unit at the University of Cape Town.

Appendix 2 — Table 5: Categories of accommodation and numbers of beds in Langa in 1976 from Selvan (1976: 7)

Type of accommodation	Number of beds
Main barracks	2032
North barracks	840
Brick employer dormitories	2020
Asbestos employer dormitories	1452
Special quarters	300
Flats – ground floor	464
Flats – other floors	1336
Single-storey hostels: Zones	13,600
Double-storey hostels: Zones	2176
<b>Total single men</b>	<b>24,220</b>
<b>Total population</b>	<b>31,495</b>

Table 5 indicates that by the mid-1970's women and children made up 23% of the combined hostel population. Selvan noted that “whereas technically contract workers live singly, in actual fact there are no single quarters in any township which do not have a greater or lesser number of women and children in them”(1976:3).

If the 1960s suggested a confluence of political interests between townspeople and migrant workers, events in the 1970s tended to emphasise the return of social division. The conduct and practices associated with the 1976 student uprising, the calls for stayaways and the enforcement of consumer boycotts, impacted significantly on the livelihoods of migrants and their ability to support their families. Many migrants perceived the destruction of beer halls and shebeens as an attack on

the already restricted social space and leisure opportunities available to them. As Ramphela (1986) has observed, the resentment and humiliation embodied in hostel living conditions – the separation from family, the privations at the centre of migrant life – had been exacerbated by decades of subtle and overt social dismissal and belittlement of rural migrants as uneducated, backward, poor and unsophisticated. And as Wilson and Mafeje have noted, these attitudes were also shaped by sexual competition, given that the ratio of men to women in Langa was extremely skewed.

At the same time, but possibly more significantly, the actions and attitudes of the youthful township actors leading the student uprising embodied a clash with the deeply encoded social conventions associated with age and constructions of manhood, so central to male migrant social values. Wilson and Mafeje (1963: 108) closely observed the practice and urban adaptations in social norms associated with *ukuhlonipa*<sup>63</sup> (respect) to one's elders and *ubudoda* (the qualities of manliness) as important organising principles and core values in Xhosa cosmology. The social upheaval of the uprising in 1976 and its extension into the era of 'ungovernability' in the 1980s meant that increasingly there were situations where uncircumcised boys<sup>64</sup> (with the support of township girls) had come to dictate to migrant and urban men, turning the social order upside down. Even where urban youth had made the transition to manhood they were still required to show respect to their elders.

Overall the social and economic roots of clashes between migrants and townspeople remain poorly analysed or contextualised. This contributes to dominant narratives and records of history in which hostel migrants en masse became synonymous with

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<sup>63</sup> Spelling in the original.

<sup>64</sup> Circumcision is a cultural practice which marks the rite of passage to manhood for boys aged between 15 and 25. "For the Xhosa male adulthood is marked not by one's age but by his journey to 'the mountain'" (Gwata: 2009: 4). Although circumcision marks the transition to adulthood, social standing in Xhosa society is age-related with older adult men accorded greater respect.

vigilantism, brutality and violence and are routinely presented as ultra-patriarchal, uneducated and unsophisticated rural men, easily duped by the apartheid security apparatus into doing their dirty work. This confirms how much South Africa social research became “trapped by apartheid and obsessed with the oppressors, their system of oppression” and restricted itself to safe “didactic contestations of apartheid” that created “a poisoned chalice” (Gordon and Spiegel, 1993: 86 - 87)) for engaged scholarship, which struggled to render the complexities of social difference.

## 1980s



**Appendix 2 — Figure 6:** This aerial photo from 1988 reveals the blurring of the settlement outline through the early flowering of informality and the southern expansion of Langa through the construction of freestanding homes in the Settlers Way development (Source unknown).

Reliable figures for the number of hostels, the number of beds and occupants in Langa are hard to come by, and data cited do not always appear to be comparable. However it was reported that by 1983 there were 393 hostel units in Langa, of which 343 were state-owned and 40 were privately managed (Elias, 1983; UPRU, 1987). These blocks were hugely overcrowded. The 11,697 beds were now occupied by a recorded 21,054 individuals (*ibid.*). As explored above, there were significant differences between blocks built in different eras which affected access to space and the quality of living conditions (Ramphela, 1993). At the same time an acute shortage of family accommodation accelerated the building of backyard shacks in the areas designated for family housing.

From the mid-1980s the state started to lose its grip on the management of the townships, and prior to the Abolition of Influx Control Act (No. 68 1986) Cape Town, together with other South African cities, started facing “an unprecedented rate of urbanisation” (UPRU, 1987: 3). The Western Cape Hostel Dwellers Association formed in 1983, working together with the Urban Problems Research Unit (UPRU) at UCT and other actors, proposed a Hostels Housing Upgrade Programme in 1987. This plan proposed making use of well-located land in buffer strips surrounding the existing townships of Langa, Nyanga and Gugulethu for the construction of housing which could make use of available bulk infrastructure.

The 1980s were a particularly turbulent period in Langa and elsewhere in South Africa. The state sought to impose Black Local Authorities (BLAs) on township residents; to survive these administrative structures had to derive their revenue from dramatic increases in rates and service charges. The response was widespread rent and service charge boycotts and attacks on black councillors which combined to force the collapse of the BLA system (Cameron, 1999). Bozzoli has insightfully reviewed this period. She observes:

*While South African townships were places where the black working class was housed cheaply and controlled easily, rebellion during the mid-80s, certainly did not take an identifiably “proletariat” form. The rebels of the 1980s adopted a revolutionary mode which was only sporadically directed at capital per se, and was nationalistic, intra-generational, mutinous and insurrectionist. The rebellions incorporated powerful strands of romanticism, millenarianism, anti-modernism and anti-liberalism, and were directed at “governmentality” rather than accumulation.*

(Bozzoli, 2000: 79)



Bozzoli examines the township *zeitgeist* and the millenarian nature of the violent contestations which were unleashed:

*Young people – the “youth” – not only sustained and led township revolt, they projected a transformative moral vision which shaped the discourses of the township in general, and which challenged the moral authority of older residents in particular... The youth also identified themselves as a separate stratum, with clear political and moral differences from their elders. A powerful age division became intensely politicised and shot through with contestations of beliefs.*

(Bozzoli, 2000: 80)

These factors provide important insights into the social impetus feeding the subsequent flowering of informality in Langa. Informality could not simply be measured by the construction of shacks and the takeover of buildings. It was also an expression, at least in part, of a move by youth in different settings to escape the strictures of authority in all its different forms. This was evident in simultaneous moves to challenge governmentality in all its manifestations – associated with the central state and its local extensions such as the BLA, as well as that related more broadly to the authority of older people and systems of patriarchy.

While the abolition of influx control would progressively lift restrictions on migration, it is important to recognise that prior to this there were urban dwellers and migrants in Langa with long histories, strong claims on space and place and particular needs and demands. Ramphele highlights how the Langa hostel population had become relatively settled. She cites a survey (Seleoane, 1985) which identified 562 council-built hostels and 41 built by employers in Langa which housed 474 short-term contract workers and 7652 ‘locals’, whom she describes as “people who have sunk their roots deep in Cape Town or have been resident long enough to

qualify for permanent status under the old system of influx control, but are unable to find suitable accommodation” (Ramphela, 1986: 19). While the number of hostel units recorded in Seleokane’s survey does not match the figures given by Selvan and cited above, the distinction between contract workers and migrants who had assumed the status of ‘locals’ is interesting, as it speaks to the intergenerational nature of hostel occupancy and growing claims of equivalence made by longstanding migrant families with Cape borners.

## **Conclusion**

Appendix 2 has set out to provide an indication of the complex historical backdrop which was largely ignored or addressed piecemeal by post-apartheid development interventions in Langa, including the N2 Gateway. This post-apartheid chronology is outlined in Appendix 3.

# Appendix 3

## Langa, Joe Slovo and the N2 Gateway – an annotated chronology

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**1992 – 2012**

### **About this appendix**

The sequence of post-1994 images which appear below (Figures 1– 3) illustrates a new phase of state intervention in the democratic era. The linear outlines of new spatial interventions, in the form of hostel upgrading and the different phases of the N2 Gateway, obscure the intense institutional contestations that occur as actors within the national, provincial and municipal spheres of government pursue different agendas and priorities. The specifics of the full range of interventions are difficult to detect from the images alone. However, there is some visual evidence of the Hostels to Homes programme, which begins to convert selected hostel blocks into family accommodation. This is partly reflected in the scattering of new red roofs of refurbished hostel blocks in Figure 2 and in the sequence of satellite images (A01–A011) in Appendix 1.

From 2000, the developmental state begins to try and reassert control over the management and use of space within Langa township. This can be seen in attempts to restructure the informal settlement, primarily to address the risk of fire and to prevent further shack construction. Following the launch of the N2 Gateway in 2004 and the huge fire in 2005, this focus shifts to attempts to eradicate the settlement altogether and replace it with ‘social housing’ and individually owned housing units. This is a shift which fundamentally redraws the landscape. A minority of

those displaced by the fire are moved into the Intersite TRA within Langa,<sup>65</sup> while others lose their foothold in Langa completely and are displaced to Delft some 20 km away, on the eastern edge of the city. At the same time the chaos associated with these large fires creates opportunities for people who have not previously lived in Langa to engineer access through patronage networks or simply to buy their way in. The interplay between the internal and external movements across and into micro localities of space and place is a seam which runs through a series of planning processes that impact on Langa as a whole, and have ramifications far beyond its borders. This appendix provides more detailed content of the five episodes of post-apartheid Langa history introduced and summarised in Chapter 4.

## Episode 1: The rise of informality in Langa



Appendix 3 — Figure 1: Aerial photo from the early 1990s showing the spread of Joe Slovo westwards from Vanguard Drive (Source unknown).

<sup>65</sup> The Intersite TRA is so named because the land it is built on is owned by Intersite.

## **The emergence of Joe Slovo informal settlement**

The aerial photo shown in Figure 1, taken in the early 1990s, provides a spatial indication of the rapid erosion of state control as the informal settlement was established and shacks constructed within individual hostel precincts and residential backyards. The growth of the shack settlement which would become known as Joe Slovo can be seen to the east and south of Langa. At the same time the outlines of the formal settlement grid continued to blur, as informal dwellings were built in available open spaces.

The accumulation of overcrowding within the hostels and the failure to maintain them, coupled with the discontent of some backyard shack dwellers who reportedly faced rising rents and landlord restrictions, contributed to the occupation of portions of land owned by the then Ikapa Council. The construction of shacks in what would become known as Joe Slovo informal settlement, started as early as 1992 in the buffer strip between Vanguard Drive and Washington Street. Initially small groupings occupied areas on two contiguous portions of land, one fronting the N2 freeway, owned by the Ikapa Council and one adjacent to Vanguard Drive owned by the Cape Town City Council. Ikapa officials reportedly turned a blind eye to the occupation, while the Cape Town City Council tried to force people off Council land.

A mass occupation followed in December 1994. This occupation took place shortly after the democratic transition, in a political context where there was little political will to act to prevent such occupations or, conversely capacity to support them with the provision of services. By 1996 the Joe Slovo dwelling count was recorded at 1195 (Abbott and Douglas, 1999). The number of dwellings increased to 2153 by May 1998 (ibid.) when local government finally provided 15 standpipes, 300 container toilets and basic refuse removal. This prompted a further influx into the settlement. The number of dwellings in Joe Slovo informal settlement had doubled to approximately 4300 by 2000 – a 100% increase since 1998 (DIMP, 2002).

## Responses to the 2000 fire

In 2000 22 fires were reported in the settlement which destroyed 296 dwellings, before the fire on 26th November which destroyed about 950 dwellings leaving approximately 1300 families homeless (DIMP, 2002). President Thabo Mbeki declared the fire a national disaster which released funds from both central and local government to 'fast-track' services to the area (ibid.). The confusion in the aftermath of the fire created opportunities for new entrants to access the settlement. The CCT embarked on a rapid 'blocking out' exercise, initiating a two-phase reconfiguration process for Joe Slovo which divided the settlement into three zones, Zones 30, 31 and 32, comprising a total of 38 blocks. Blocks were pegged and sites allocated at approximately 44 m<sup>2</sup> per dwelling. Originally between 60 and 150 dwellings were planned for each block but densities were later increased to between 100 and 200 dwellings. Each house was allocated a number and occupiers were recorded in a database. Tracks, water mains and fire hydrants were installed between December 2000 and March 2001.



Appendix 3 — Figure 2: Joe Slovo and the southern part of Langa in 2001 showing newly blocked out areas. Source: Google Earth



Figure 2 shows how the CCT had begun to block out the settlement while extending services to Zones 31 and 32 between April 2001 and May 2002. Planners were confident that these infrastructural interventions would reduce fire risk and make the settlement more manageable (van Niekerk and Hugo, 2002).

A total of R14.4 million was allocated to relocation of dwellings, upgrading of fire hydrants, and provision of water, tracks, basic stormwater drainage and electrification. The City relocated households living on the Eskom power line servitude to an adjacent resettlement area in Zone 30.



Appendix 3 — Figure 3: The reconfigured informal settlement in 2002. Source: Van Niekerk and Hugo (2002: 6)

Figure 3 illustrates renewed attempts by the CCT to inscribe a more ordered spatial logic on the informal settlement. However the provision of free services on well-located land in the city, close to rail links and adjacent industrial areas, further increased Joe Slovo's desirability as a location for people seeking a foothold in the city, while retaining homesteads primarily in rural areas of the Eastern Cape. It also made the settlement attractive to people living in more peripheral areas of Cape

Town who sought to be closer to work and transport networks. The Joe Slovo dwelling count grew to 4571 in 2002. The CCT's failed attempts to impose restrictions on the construction of further shacks led to an increase in population densities per dwelling, as dwelling occupiers started to subdivide and sublet rooms. By 2003 the City estimated that there were 5431 dwellings in the informal settlement. The Disaster Mitigation Programme for Sustainable Livelihoods (DIMP) estimated a 38% increase in the number of dwellings from aerial photographs since the previous year (DIMP, 2002).

## **Episode 2: The launch of BNG and the N2 Gateway**

### **The war on shacks**

On the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2004 Minister of Housing Lindiwe Sisulu tabled the budget vote for her ministry for the 2004/2005 financial year in the National Assembly, in which she pledged to eradicate informal settlements across South Africa by 2014 and prohibited people allocated RDP houses from selling them for eight years. Extracts from her speech cast light on the dominant discourses with regard to informality and provide important insights into the political, technical and instrumental rationalities which would shape subsequent interventions of the state in terms of the N2 Gateway project.

The Minister first alluded to the perceived threat to the established order posed by growing urban informality. She then evoked her former role as Minister of Intelligence in 2001 to dismiss these fears and reframe informality as a housing challenge. Her speech illuminates key elements shaping the discourse of the developmental state imaginary. These coalesce into a narrative about the mass delivery of houses that seeks to simplify, if not completely ignore, complex social and locational histories.



## **The N2 Gateway as a pilot project**

An early official briefing document issued by the National Department of Housing, the Provincial Western Cape Department of Housing and the CCT described the role of the N2 Gateway:

*It is a lead project within the overall informal settlements programme of the City of Cape Town; and a pilot project to spearhead the Department of Housing's policy and programmatic reorientations, with specific reference to the soon to be finalised Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme.*

(Department of Housing, 2004b: 1–2)

The briefing document described the situation on the ground in Joe Slovo as follows:

*The households in the area suffer acute shelter and income poverty; their incomes are very depressed; education levels are extremely low; unemployment is three times higher than in the rest of the Western Cape; and, access to adequate water, sanitation and energy is poor but is slowly improving. These factors combine to create a socially toxic environment characterised by high levels of contact and social fabric crime.*

(Department of Housing, 2004b: 2)

## **The 2005 fire and the launch of the N2 Gateway**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2005 a major fire broke out in Langa which burned from the informal settlement into the Zones, destroying a total of 2590 shacks and hostels, leaving 12,950 people homeless (Stewart, 2008). Unlike what had happened after previous fires, a political decision was taken to prevent people rebuilding their shacks. Fire victims were accommodated in tents and community halls locally as well as in disused buildings at Tygerberg Hospital, far from Langa. Subsequently

hundreds of families were relocated to Delft on the outskirts of the city and the remainder resettled in the Intersite TRA along the north-eastern edge of Langa.

A month later, in February 2005, Minister Sisulu formally launched the N2 Gateway Housing project to provide 22,000 housing opportunities, characterised as “a crucially important litmus test” (Khan, 2010: 19) of state housing policy and responses to informality. This followed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Minister of Housing, the Member of the Executive Council (MEC) for Housing in the Western Cape, Richard Dyantyi and the Cape Town Mayor, Nomaindia Mfeketo. Sobambisana, a consortium of six companies, was appointed to construct N2 Gateway housing.

The intergovernmental management arrangements for the N2 Gateway included an apex committee known as the ‘M3’, chaired by the Minister and on which the MEC and the Mayor were represented. ‘Steercom’, a technical committee, brought together officials from the three spheres of government with a contracted project manager, and reported to the M3. The construction of the N2 Gateway Phase 1 – a 705-unit social housing complex – started on 15 March 2005.

## **Episode 3: Contestation and collapse**

### **Changes in the political landscape**

Early in 2006 a series of changes took place in the political landscape which intensely politicised the N2 Gateway. In February, following municipal elections the DA took political control of the CCT from the ANC in a coalition with other parties. In a media statement Helen Zille, the new DA Mayor, characterised the N2 Gateway as a “poisoned chalice”, citing cost overruns, problems with the allocation of flats and the slow rate of construction (COHRE, 2009). This prompted a sharp political response from national government, which dismantled the M3 tripartite project management committee. The Housing MINMEC announced that the CCT had been removed as

the implementing agent of the N2 Gateway (ibid., 2009). The Minister appointed Thubelisha Homes, a special purpose Section 21 company as the new project manager. This marked the start of a period of intense and multidimensional contestation, compounded by technical challenges and allegations of mismanagement in the implementation of the project.

### **Contestations surrounding N2 Gateway Phase 1**

At a meeting in June 2006 in Langa, Western Cape Housing MEC Richard Dyantyi defended national government's decision to open the applications for the 705 Phase 1 Flats to people in need of housing from the surrounding areas such as Bonteheuwel, Bokmakierie etc. (Hawker, 2006). The MEC is reported to have announced that flat rentals would be between R165 and R200 per month for small flats and R690 for larger units. At the same meeting he announced that Phase 2 would consist of 1000 freestanding houses with yards (ibid., 2006).

This public undertaking was soon overtaken by the announcement of a different schedule of rental charges which was distributed in pamphlets. In the new cost structure monthly rentals escalated to R500 for a 27 m<sup>2</sup> and R1050 for a 40 m<sup>2</sup> dwelling – prices which were beyond the financial reach of the vast majority of Joe Slovo residents. Plans for Phase 2 of Joe Slovo changed again after Thubelisha Homes entered into a partnership with First National Bank (FNB) to build 3000 bonded houses on land in Joe Slovo and Delft. These were to cost between R150,000 and R250,000. FNB undertook to make bonds available to people earning R3500–R7500 per month. The selection of the beneficiaries for the first 705 units in Phase 1 was only finalised on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2007 – almost two years after the N2 Gateway had commenced (Auditor-General, 2008). Very few beneficiaries came from the informal settlement and the perception was that the majority came from outside of Langa.

Shortly after the households selected for Phase 1 took occupation of the flats, a grouping amongst the new occupiers of Phase 1 social housing units initiated a rent boycott, complaining about unaffordable rent escalations, construction faults, damp, plumbing problems and blocked toilets. No social housing institution had been put in place to manage the complex. Thubelisha was left with management responsibility for a social housing project, which was beyond its capabilities. The rent boycott was quickly paralleled by the subletting of units, with many of the original occupiers acting as lessors, pocketing rent payments that they received. Monthly rental revenue received by Thubelisha rapidly declined.

Early in August 2007, while the rent boycott gathered momentum in the Phase 1 flats, residents from Joe Slovo informal settlement marched to Parliament to hand a memorandum to the Minister demanding that RDP houses, rather than bonded houses, be constructed in Phase 2. These concerns were ignored and in the same month Thubelisha Homes entered into a contract with First Rand Bank which absolved the bank of any requirement that the development serve a target market limited to persons currently residing in the Joe Slovo settlement or Langa areas. Around this time Thubelisha announced that it intended to carry out a rollover upgrade rather than an in situ upgrade, and began a process of 'voluntary removal' of Joe Slovo residents to a TRA in Delft. This combination of events marked the social tipping point, and on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2007 more than one thousand residents from Joe Slovo informal settlement blockaded the main N2 highway.

In response to the protest actions and residents' refusal to be 'strategically relocated', Thubelisha Homes, the national Minister for Housing and the Western Cape MEC for Local Government and Housing initiated urgent eviction proceedings against informal dwellers in Joe Slovo. The state's application was upheld by Judge Hlophe

in the Cape High Court<sup>66</sup> and the matter was taken on appeal directly to the Constitutional Court, the highest court in the land where the case was heard in August 2008.

Shortly before the case was heard Thubelisha Homes acknowledged that it was technically insolvent, having made a loss of R67.5 million and was wound up in July 2008 (PMG, 2009b). This created an institutional vacuum in the management of the N2 Gateway which was filled by the promulgation of the Housing Development Agency Act (No. 23 of 2008) which led to the establishment of the HDA.

## **Episode 4: New directions**

### **Constitutional Court judgment in the Joe Slovo case**

On 10<sup>th</sup> June 2009 five judgments were handed down by the Constitutional Court upholding the Cape High Court decision to grant an application to evict the 20,000 residents of Joe Slovo. The Court ordered the relocation of occupiers in Joe Slovo to TRAs in Delft to be completed by 21<sup>st</sup> June 2010<sup>67</sup>. The judgement recorded that the state was now prepared to consent to an order in terms of which 70% of the subsidised houses still to be constructed at Joe Slovo would be allocated to unspecified Joe Slovo residents. It also ordered the provision of alternative temporary accommodation of prescribed construction standards and levels of service to all those who vacated Joe Slovo. It required the parties to negotiate on the processes to be employed for the move and interdicted residents from returning to Joe Slovo to rebuild shacks once they had been removed. The Court required government to submit affidavits reporting on progress in implementing the order.

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<sup>66</sup> Thubelisha Homes and Various Occupants, Case No. 13189/07. Judgment delivered 10<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2007. <http://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZAWCHC/2008/14.pdf>

<sup>67</sup> Residents of Joe Slovo Community, Western Cape v Thubelisha Homes and Others, (CCT 22/08) Judgment delivered on 10<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2009. <http://www.saflii.org/za/cases/ZACC/2009/16.pdf>

By the time the Constitutional Court had issued its judgment the Department of Housing had metamorphosed into the Department of Human Settlements, which was to “take on a more holistic focus”(PMG, 2009a) under Minister Sexwale. In the same month the Community Organisation Resource Centre (CORC) – an NGO linked to Shack Dwellers International (SDI) – published the results of a self-enumeration study of households and their occupiers in the informal settlement undertaken with the Joe Slovo Task Team. This put the settlement population at 7946 persons living in 2748 shacks (CORC and Joe Slovo Community Task Team, 2009). The report noted that the population might have been slightly under-estimated as there were some households which had refused to provide information to the enumerators.

### ***In situ* upgrade**

In August 2009 the DA MEC for Human Settlements in the Western Cape expressed grave concerns about the feasibility of the Constitutional Court judgment and its practical, social, financial and legal consequences relating to the provision of TRA housing for the occupiers, as well as about the costs of relocation. He argued that *in situ* upgrading would be much more cost-effective. The MEC announced the commissioning of an expert study and requested an extension of the deadline for reporting back to the Constitutional Court. This and several other extensions were subsequently granted. On 7<sup>th</sup> December 2009 a meeting was held in Joe Slovo at which the MEC for Housing and the CCT announced that “all housing opportunities which will be erected in Joe Slovo will now be allocated to current or former residents of Joe Slovo”(PGWC, 2009). This formally replaced the earlier formula which had allocated 70% of the housing to Joe Slovo residents while reserving 30% for backyarders in Langa.

In January 2010 Minister Sexwale briefed the Housing Portfolio Committee on the N2 Gateway, noting that “deep-seated social strain was being experienced at Joe

Slovo 3. There were contestations between backyarders and informal settlement residents”(PMG, 2010).

The N2 Gateway reverted to its original vision of providing denser settlement on well-located land with the support of the Provincial Government of the Western Cape (PGWC) and the HDA approached this as an in situ upgrade based on the national Upgrading of Informal Settlements Programme (UISP).



Appendix 3 — Figure 4: The settlement at the start of interviews for the research study in 2010. Source: Google Earth

## Episode 5: The techne of planning and new contests to survive and thrive

As noted in Chapter 4 this episode is ongoing. Figure 5 below provides an image of Joe Slovo and the progress made on the N2 Gateway a few months after the end of



the research study primary focus period of 2000—2012 . Double-storey units had been constructed, and intense contestation was taking place over the allocation of the units in the north of the Phase 3 development and over the allocation of temporary units in the Intersite TRA. At the same time land was being cleared next to the show houses for construction along the N2 highway.



Appendix 3 — Figure 5: Joe Slovo and the N2 Gateway, March 2013. Source: Google Earth

## Conclusion

Appendix 3 has provided an overview of developments in Langa with a primary focus on Joe Slovo and the N2 Gateway. The same period has also seen an extensive Hostels to Homes programme being undertaken which, the study argues, has been largely disconnected from the N2 Gateway pilot programme.



# Appendix 4

## Interview chronology

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### About this appendix

Appendix 4 provides a chronology of the interviews conducted for this study.

Transcripts of these interviews totalled almost 450,000 words. Despite several individuals having provided written consent for their identities to be made publicly available, a decision has been taken to give all interview sources anonymity—given that almost four years have passed since some of the interviews were conducted and informants may find themselves in changed circumstances today.

### Interview listing and chronology

Appendix 4 — Table 1: The chronology of interviews undertaken for this study

Interview #	Informant reference	Date	Language of interview	Gender	Organisation
Interview 01	FEDUP 01F	23 June 2010	Xhosa/English	F	FEDUP
Interview 02	CORC 01M	23 June 2010	English	M	CORC
Interview 03	ISN 01M	25 June 2010	Xhosa/English	M	ISN
Interview 04	CORC 02F	28 June 2010	English	F	Ikhayami/CORC
Interview 05	PPM 01F	28 June 2010	Xhosa/English	F	PPM
Interview 06	CCT 001AM	29 June 2010	English	M	CCT Informal Settlements Management
Interview 07	Task team 01M	30 June 2010	Xhosa/English	M	Joe Slovo Task Team
Interview 08	PGWC 01M	02 July 2010	English	M	Provincial Housing
Interview 09	LRC 01M	07 July 2010	English	M	LRC
Interview 10	ThubelishaH01M	22 May 2011	English	M	Ex-Thubelisha Homes
Interview 11	CCT Official 01M CCT Official 02M	08 September 2011	English	M	CCT Informal Settlement Management and Anti Land Invasion Unit

Interview #	Informant reference	Date	Language of interview	Gender	Organisation
Interview 12	LCouncillor 01M	13 September 2011	English	M	ANC Councillor Ward 52 Langa
Interview 13	CCT Official 03M	22 September 2011	English	M	CCT: Disaster Management
Interview 14	CCT Official 04M	23 September 2011	English	M	CCT: N2 Gateway Steercom
Interview 15	LBackyarders 01FG	25 September 2011	Xhosa/English		Langa backyarders
Interview 16	HDA 01M	27 September 2011	English	M	HDA
Interview 17	LHostel 01M	08 October 2011	English	M	Transnet hostels
Interview 18	CCT Official 05M	10 October 2011	English	M	CCT: Development Support
Interview 19	CCT Official 01M CCT Official 02M	20 October 2011	English	M	CCT: Informal Settlement Management and Anti Land Invasion Unit
Interview 20	LN2G Phase 1 01M	20 October 2011	English	M	Joe Slovo Park
Interview 21	LSettlers 01F	20 October 2011	English	F	Settlers
Interview 22	LN2G Phase 1 02M	23 October 2011	English	M	Joe Slovo Park
Interview 23	Lsettlers 02M	23 October 2011	English	M	Settlers
Interview 24	LHostels 01M	06 November 2011	English	M	Transnet hostels
Interview 25	LSettlers 03M	12 November 2011	English	M	Langa suburban
Interview 26	LHostels 02FG	13 November 2011	Xhosa/English	Group	Baptist Hostel
Interview 27	LHostels 03M	13 November 2011	Xhosa/English	M	New Flats
Interview 28	Lintersite 02M	19 November 2011	Xhosa/English	Group	Intersite

<b>Interview #</b>	<b>Informant reference</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Language of interview</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Interview 29	LIntersite 01F	19 November 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Intersite
Interview 30	LIntersite 03F	19 November 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Intersite
Interview 31	LIntersite 04MF	19 November 2011	Xhosa/English	M/F	Intersite
Interview 32	LHostels 04M	26 November 2011	Xhosa/English	M	Old Flats
Interview 33	LHostels 05F	26 November 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Old Flats
Interview 34	LHostels 06F	26 November 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Old Flats
Interview 35	LFamily 01F	29 November 2011	English	F	Langa suburban
Interview 36	LJoeSlovo 01F	05 December 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 37	LJoeSlovo 02F	05 December 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 38	LJoeSlovo 03M	05 December 2011	Xhosa/English	M	Joe Slovo
Interview 39	LJoeSlovo 04F	06 December 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 40	LJoeSlovo 05F	06 December 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 41	LJoeSlovo 06F	06 December 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 42	LJoeSlovo 07MF	07 December 2011	Xhosa/English	M/F	Joe Slovo
Interview 43	LJoeSlovo 08FF	07 December 2011	Xhosa/English	FF	Joe Slovo
Interview 44	LJoeSlovo 09MF	07 December 2011	Xhosa/English	M/F	Joe Slovo
Interview 45	LJSShowHouse	09 December	Xhosa/English	F	Show Houses

Interview #	Informant reference	Date	Language of interview	Gender	Organisation
	01F	2011			
Interview 46	LJSShowHouse 02F	09 December 2011	English	F	Show Houses
Interview 47	LJSShowHouse 03M	09 December 2011	English	M	Show Houses
Interview 48	LJoeSlovo 10MF	10 December 2011	Xhosa/English	M/F	Joe Slovo
Interview 49	LJoeSlovo 11F	10 December 2011	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 50	LJoeSlovo 12FF	25 January 2012	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 51	LJoeSlovo 13M	28 January 2012	Xhosa/English	M	Joe Slovo
Interview 52	LJoeSlovo 14M	28 January 2012	Xhosa/English	M	Joe Slovo
Interview 53	LJoeSlovo 15F	28 January 2012	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 54	LJoe Slovo 17F	24 February 2012	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 55	LJoeSlovo 16F	24 February 2012	Xhosa/English	F	Joe Slovo
Interview 56	CCT Official 06M	09 March 2012	English	M	CCT ISLP
Interview 57	LJoeSlovo 18MF	15 March 2012	Xhosa/English	M/F	Joe Slovo
Interview 58	LJoeSlovo 19MF	15 March 2012	Xhosa/English	M/F	Joe Slovo
Interview 59	LJoeSlovo 20M	15 March 2012	Xhosa/English	M	Joe Slovo
Interview 60	LGreyHostel 01M	19 April 2012	Xhosa/English	M	SA Foundries Hostel
Interview 61	LGreyHostel 02F	19 April 2012	Xhosa/English	F	SA Foundries Hostel
Interview 62	CCTOfficial 07M	07 May 2012	English	Male	CCT Development Support
Interview 63	LCouncillor 02M	14 October 2012	English	Male	New Flats
Interview 64	Civil Society 01M	16 October 2012	English	Male	AEC
Interview 65	LN2G PH3 01F	19 October 2012	Xhosa/English	Female	N2 Gateway Phase 3
Interview 66	LN2G PH3 02M	19 October 2012	Xhosa/English	Male	N2 Gateway Phase 3
Interview 67	LN2G PH3 03F	19 October 2012	Xhosa/English	Female	N2 Gateway Phase 3

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